The Primacy of Practical Reason in Kant's Philosophy

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Abstract

This paper is intended to demonstrate the primacy of practical reason over the theoretical one in Kant's philosophy from two perspectives: one deals with the interest, teleology and unity of reason as whole, the other explains practical reason's primacy in moral theology. From the first perspective, we discuss the problems of how pure reason can be practical and how the objects of theoretical and practical reason, i.e., nature and morality can be in harmony. The paper demonstrates that pure reason can be practical because it can determine human will to actions. And by assuming the ideas of God and a moral world, nature can be regarded as being purposively ordered. From the second perspective, the crucial problem is how and in what sense practical reason is justified to make the practical postulates. By considering the conditions for human morality, the existence of God, immortality of the soul and freedom of the will can be justified. Accordingly, there are two aspects from which the primacy of practical reason can be shown. First, practical reason is unconditionally justified in believing the harmony between the realms of nature and morality. Moreover, it is justified to postulate the existence of God and the belief that nature is purposively arranged.

摘要

本文旨在從兩個觀點去討論康德哲學中實踐理性相對於理論理性的優先性。首先，我們從理性整體的目的論、興趣和統一性的觀點出發；然後再從道德神學的觀點去論述實踐理性的優先性。在第一個角度中，我們要處理理性整體的統一性及一致性問題，即純粹理性如何可以實踐地運行，以及理論理性的對象 (自然) 與實踐理性的對象 (道德) 如何可以和諧一致。純粹理性可以實踐地運行是因爲它可以決定吾人的意志。另一方面，透過假設神及道德世界兩個理念，吾人可設想自然是有目的地被安排。在道德神學的脈絡中，我們處理實踐理性在甚麼意義下合法地作實踐的設準。當理性考慮道德如何可能的條件時，實踐理性可以預設神的存在、靈魂的不朽與自由的實在性。按上述兩個觀點，我們可從兩方面論述實踐理性的優先性。首先，實踐理性能無條件地証立自然與道德之間的和諧。此外，實踐理性能証立神的存在及自然的目的性。

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Key to Abbreviations and Translations of Kant's work

BL *The Blomberg Logic* in *Lectures on Logic*, trans. and ed. by J. Michael Young, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

CJ *Critique of Judgment*, trans. with an Introduction by Werner S. Pluhar,Indianapolis/ Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1987.

CPrR *Critique of Practical Reason*, trans. by Werner S. Pluhar, with an Introduction by Stephen Engstrom, Indianapolis/ Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2002.

CPR *Critique of Pure Reason*, trans. by Werner S. Pluhar, with an Introduction by Patricia W. Kitcher, Indianapolis/ Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 1996.

GMM *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* in *Practical Philosophy*, trans. and ed. by Mary J. Gregor, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

JL *The Jäsche Logic* in *Lectures on Logic*, trans. and ed. by J. Michael Young, Cambridge, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

LPR *Lectures on the Philosophical Doctrine of Religion* in *Religion and Rational Theology*, trans. and ed. by Allen W. Wood, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

MS *The Metaphysics of Morals* in *Practical Philosophy*, trans. and ed. by Mary J. Gregor, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

OT *What does it mean to orient oneself in thinking* in *Religion and Rational Theology*, trans. and ed. by Allen W. Wood, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Rel. *Religion within the Boundaries of Mere Reason* in *Religion and Rational Theology*, trans. and ed. by Allen W. Wood, New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Introduction

In the section of the Dialectic of the *Critique of Practical Reason* entitled "On the Primacy of Pure Practical Reason in its Linkage with Speculative Reason," Kant distinguishes between two senses of the term "primacy." Kant claims that

> by primacy among two or more things linked by reason I mean the preeminence of one thing [insofar as] it is the first determining basis of the linkage with the rest. In a narrower, practical signification it signifies the preeminence of the interest of one thing insofar as to this [interest] (which cannot be put second to any others) the interest of the others is subordinate. (*CPrR*, 5: 120)

This paper is going to analyze in what senses and in which contexts practical reason has primacy over the theoretical one. We will show that there are two dimensions regarding the primacy of the practical. The first dimension is the superiority of practical reason in the realm of moral faith [*Glauben*]. To say that practical reason has a superior status in this respect means that practical reason is justified to postulate the immortality of the soul, freedom of the will and the existence of God as the conditions of morality, even though speculative reason can neither confirm nor deny them. Another perspective on the practical primacy refers to an overarching conception of the nature and structure of reason. Human reason has a profound need for an ultimate justification of everything we encounter as conditioned. Just as reason seeks what is absolutely primary in the realm of end, Kant also seeks a final unconditional goal not only for human beings but also for the universe itself. In short, the second dimension regarding the primary of the practical points to Kant's concepts

of unity, interest, and teleology of reason as a whole. Therefore, we have to explain how theoretical and practical reason are united, and how their respective products, namely nature and freedom, harmonize with each other. We will argue that the regulative idea of the soul is the key to uniting the two uses of reason, and the assumption of the ideas of a moral world and a supreme intelligence can help explain how nature and morality are in harmony. Therefore, we conclude that there are two aspects in which practical reason is superior to the theoretical one. The first one is that from the moral point of view the belief in the harmony between nature and morality as well as the belief in the existence of God are unconditionally justified. The second point is based on a much stronger assumption. It assumes the (subjectively certain) belief that God exists (as a practical postulate) and nature is purposively ordered.

This paper consists of three main parts. The chief aim of the first part is to explain why the problem of the primacy of practical reason is important in Kant's philosophy. We will also justify the interpretation of viewing the primacy of practical reason with the above two perspectives. The second part shows how theoretical and practical reason are united by the idea of the soul, and how nature and morality can be harmonized with each other by the assumption of a moral world and God. At last, we will analyze the superiority of practical reason in the realm of pure rational faith and how the argument for moral theology serves as a necessary condition for the realization of the highest good. We can regard the last part of this paper as the supplementary part to the former one, since it goes into detail to discuss the nature and structure of the postulate of God, and in what sense it is justified to assert the existence of God.

I. Preliminary Analysis

a) The Importance of the Problem of Practical Primacy

This section will first explain how important practical reason and morality are in Kant's philosophy. Pure practical reason in Kant's philosophy has a kind of preeminence because its moral laws alone reveal what is of unconditional interest and value. The unconditional good is our moral will. Although Kant recognizes that mere theoretical and prudent activities also have considerable positive value, he insists that they are rooted in secondary interests. Thus, they are incomparable with the primary worth of morality. Ameriks claims that

> Mere speculative reason and mere natural philosophy can at most reveal some basic parameters, some broad features that our moral perspective must be consistent with, but they alone cannot provide anything like the positive and relatively "filled in" version of our ultimate destiny given by the postulates of practical reason.[1]

This means that reason (in a broad sense) in its speculative use can lead us through the realm of experiences, but it cannot fulfill reason's need since reason cannot be fully satisfied with what is given within the boundary of possible experience. Kant thinks that the ultimate and highest use of reason lies in its practical one. That's why Kant claims that

[1] Karl Ameriks, "Kant, Fichte, and the Radical Primacy of the Practical," *Kant and the Fate of Autonomy*, Cambridge, U. K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 190.

> Essential purposes are not yet, on that account, the highest purposes, of which (in the case of perfect systematic unity of reason) there can be only one. Hence essential purposes are either the final purpose itself or subsidiary purposes that necessarily belong to the final purpose as means. The final purpose is none other than the whole vocation of the human being, and the philosophy concerning it is called morality. (*CPR*, A 840/B 868)

In the "Canon of Pure Reason" of the first *Critique*, Kant repeatedly claims that the speculative interest of reason is subordinate to the practical interest of reason, and the only path that brings better fortune is reason's practical use (*CPR*, A 796/B 824).

Kant emphasizes the superior status of moral laws in the second *Critique*. He argues that the moral laws demand that we strive to produce in nature a state in which happiness is distributed to persons quite exactly in proportion to their morality (*CPrR*, 5: 110). However, if this is not the case, then the moral laws themselves will be illusory and their purposes would be empty imaginations (*CPrR*, 5: 114). All the above cited passages show that morality and practical use of reason represent the final goal of Kant's philosophy. From this, the primacy of the practical reason extends the possibility of employing reason beyond the realm of experience. Kneller suggests that

> It (the postulates of practical reason, immortality of the soul and existence of God) is a springboard for this leap of reason, which in effect involves breaching the boundaries of theoretical reason for the sake of practice that is the point why Kant explicitly argues for the primacy of practical reason.[2]

[2] Jane Kneller, "Aesthetic Value and the Primacy of the Practical in Kant's Philosophy," in *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 36, 2002, p. 378.

b) "Reason," "Speculative," "Theoretical" and "Practical"

i) The Concept "Reason"

In Kant's system, the word "reason" is used in two different senses: reason in a broader sense refers to the whole faculty of knowing (including understanding and sensibility), while in a narrower sense it means a part of the cognitive faculty, which guides understanding to reach the highest and systematic unity of cognition. In the beginning of the first *Critique*, Kant deals with the broad sense of reason, whereas the examination of "reason" in the "Transcendental Dialectic" deals with the narrow one.[3] Yet, Rotenstreich reminds us that the distinction of understanding and reason should not be understood as the difference between the discursive process of knowledge acquisition and the ultimate possession of knowledge; instead Kant's distinction points to a different aspect: understanding unites sensible data, while reason unites understanding's manifold cognitions.[4] The function of reason is different from that of understanding. Reason itself contains the origin of certain concepts and principles that it borrows neither from the senses nor from understanding. It is a power to infer, i.e., to judge mediately. An inference of reason

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[3] In *The Gathering of Reason*, John Sallis also identified two different senses of the term reason in Kant's philosophy. He claims that "[a]ccording to the broader of the two senses, the Aesthetic and Analytic belong to the critique of pure reason no less than does the Dialectic, for this broader sense corresponds to the mere 'contrasting [of] the rational with the empirical'— that contrast to which Kant comes by beginning 'from the point at which the common root of our power of knowledge divides and throws out two stems' (A 835/B 863). This sense is to be distinguished from the narrower sense according to which reason is only *one* of the higher faculty of knowledge, to be contrasted especially with the understanding." John Sallis, *The Gathering of Reason*, Athens: Ohio University Press, 1980, p. 47.

[4] Nathan Rotenstreich, "The Primacy of Practical Reason," *Experience and its Systematization: Studies in Kant*, The Hague: M. Nijoff, 1965, p. 111.

does not deal with intuitions in order to bring them under rules (as understanding does with its categories), but deals with concepts and judgment. In an inference, reason seeks the universal condition of its judgment (i.e., of the conclusion), and a syllogism is itself nothing but a judgment made by means of subsuming its condition under a universal rule (major premise) (*CPR*, A 645/B 673).

Apart from the logical use of reason in inferences, reason has another positive use, namely its regulative function. Reason is the power of providing unity to the rules of understanding under regulative principles. As stated above, reason never deals with experience or any object directly, but with the understanding in order to provide the understanding's manifold cognitions [5] with a priori unity through concepts. Manifoldness of rules and unity of principles are demands of reason. Reason makes these demands in order to bring the understanding into thoroughgoing coherence with itself, just as understanding brings the manifold of intuition under concepts and thereby brings the intuition into connection (*CPR*, A 305/B 362). Thus, reason's regulative use results in a system of cognition, rather than a contingent aggregate (*CPR*, A 645/B 673).

In fact, reason does sometimes misuse its power when it tries to attain knowledge about objects beyond the realm of possible experience. Under this circumstance, illusion might arise from human reason. Yet, it is the fate of reason itself to attempt to step beyond the boundary of all experiences. That's why Kant discusses about the transcendental illusion and dialectic in the first *Critique*. For Kant, dialectic as such

[5] In Kant's philosophy, the term "cognition" is not synonymous with the term "knowledge," since on his view certain cases of practical cognition are not knowledge, such as cognition of God, which is not knowledge, but moral faith. See *CPR*, A 633-4/B 661-2.

is a *logic of illusion*. "Transcendental illusion" is something which influences principles whose use cannot be applied to experience. Thus, it misleads us to go beyond the empirical use of the categories and to think that there is an expansion of pure understanding (*CPR*, A 295/B 352).

ii) "Speculative," "Theoretical" and "Practical"

Kant sometimes considers the use of speculative reason as a special use of theoretical reason, but he also sometimes uses these two terms interchangeably. In fact, the term "speculative" at least has three senses in Kant's philosophy.[6] First of all, speculative understanding means abstract thinking, which contrasts with common sense or common understanding. In *the Jäsche Logic*, Kant claims that cognition of the universal *in abstracto* is *speculative* cognition, whereas cognition of the universal *in concreto* is common cognition (*JL*, 9: 27). However, it appears to me that Kant admits that the frequent use of common understanding can rise up to the level of speculative understanding. He asserts that common human understanding (*sensus communis*) is in itself a touchstone for discovering the mistakes of the *artificial* use of the understanding. "This is what it means *to orient* oneself in thought or in the speculative use of reason by means of the common understanding, when one uses the *common* understanding as a test for passing judgment on the correctness of the *speculative* use." (*JL*, 9: 57) This passage signifies a transition from common understanding to the speculative one in our thought. On the one hand, it is worth pointing out that both the common understanding and the speculative one cannot be a

[6] For the three senses of the term "speculative," see Lau Chong-fuk, *Spekulation*, forthcoming in *Kant-Lexikon*, ed. G. Mohr, J. Stolzenberg and M. Willaschek, Berlin/ New York: Walter de Gruyter.

branch of logic. Logic cannot be a science of speculative understanding, since Kant thinks that the speculative use of reason would be an organon for other science which ought to deal with all possible uses of the understanding and reason. Also, Kant does not think that logic can be a product of the common understanding. "The common understanding is the faculty by which we have insight into the rules of cognition *in concreto*. However, Logic is a science of the rules of thought *in abstracto*." (*JL*, 9: 19) It turns out that, for Kant, logic cannot be divided into the logic of the common and that of the speculative understanding.

The second sense of the term "speculative" opposes to the term "practical" as imperatives. This sense of "speculative" can show that it is a subset of "theoretical" from which something practical can be derived. It means that practical cognition is not only opposed to theoretical cognition, but also to the speculative one. Kant claims that practical cognitions are either *imperatives*, and are to this extend opposed to *theoretical* cognitions or they contain the *grounds for possible imperatives* and are to this extent opposed to *speculative* cognitions (*JL*, 9: 86). The term imperative in general expresses a possible free action from which a certain end can be actualized. In *the Blomberg Logic*, it is also suggested that if any kind of cognition contains moving grounds for actions, then it is practical. A practical cognition is either cognition of ends or of means; however, the latter must be clearly distinguished from the former. We call doctrine of skill a practical cognition of means, but only doctrine of morality can be called practical cognition of ends (*BL*, 16: 516-7). Thus, a cognition that contains imperatives is practical, and to this extent it is contrasted with theoretical cognition. It is because practical cognitions are about actions and what ought to be happened, while theoretical cognitions are about facts. As stated above,

Kant seems to think that speculative cognitions are those that contain no grounds for possible imperatives. Nevertheless, if we oppose practical cognition as a doctrine of skill to speculative cognitions, then they can also be called theoretical, provided that imperatives or something related to skills can be derived from them. According to Kant, considered in this respect, speculative cognitions are practical as to *content* (*in potentia*) (*JL*, 9: 86). However, in another sense, if we regard practical cognitions as doctrine of morality, then speculative cognitions contain no grounds for any practical cognition. For example, there are a lot of such speculative propositions in theology, but they are just misuse of speculative reason.

The third sense of speculative reason refers to a power that aims to surpass the realm of possible experience. In this sense, speculative reason is ultimately concerned with three objects, i.e., immortality of the soul, freedom of the will, and existence of God. In this respect, speculative reason would not be able to provide any sufficient bases of proof for those objects and to acquire any knowledge. It is because all propositions about objects that lie beyond the realm of possible experience are theoretically illegitimate. In this case, all attempts of reason's speculative use are fruitless. And it cannot make any progress in the realm of suprasensible because speculative use of reason cannot form any synthetic judgment about its objects. As a result, all the propositions about rational psychology, rational cosmology and rational theology are unavoidably fruitless. Yet, at the same time, Kant reminds us that speculative reason has at least provided us with room for an expansion of our cognition, even if it will leave that room empty. From this, he suggests that only the practical employment of reason can fill up the room.

For the meaning of "practical", in its broadest definition, the practical domain is instituted by the empirical component of human nature. Kant claims that "everything practical, insofar as it contains incentives, refers to feelings" (*CPR*, A 15/B 29). In this respect, the primary practical problem is to what extent man's empirical nature can be directed by ethical imperatives of reason.[7] Although there are no principles that can govern man's empirical nature, the ethical approach, which aims at providing universal principles of moral conduct, does not ignore any empirical factors. Indeed, feeling or emotions are included in the realm of moral discourse. Their moral significance is that they are subjected to or mastered by imperatives: "the supreme principles and basic concepts of morality … must still bring in such pleasure and displeasure, desires and inclinations, etc. in [formulating] the concept of duty: viz., as an obstacle to be overcome, or as a stimulus that is not to be turned into a motive" (*CPR*, A 15/B 29). For Kant, the empirical factors are assigned moral significance only insofar as they are related to the ethical concept of duty.

However, there is a more restricted sense of the term "practical." It is in the sense of practical knowledge, which contains imperatives. From this sense of "practical," the use of reason is directed to the determination of a subject and its volition. With regard to the narrower sense of the practical, the primary problem is whether the empirical will can be moved and determined by imperatives which are not empirical. Here the idea of the practical is defined in regard to the idea of practical knowledge. Practical knowledge cannot be described in terms of empirical-psychological data because it is primarily concerned with what ought to be or imperatives that can give

[7] Nathan Rotenstreich, "The Primacy of Practical Reason," *Experience and its Systematization: Studies in Kant*, The Hague: M. Nijoff, 1965, p. 111.

rise to action as volition.[8] From this, practical knowledge is related to the empirical subject and its volition on the one hand, and the imperatives expressing what ought to be on the other.

Dieter Henrich attempts to define Kant's concept of the practical by distinguishing it from Aristotle's concept of practice. Compared to Aristotle's concept of practice, Kant's concept of "practice" is not so much in the Aristotelian sense of the word as in the sense of "poesis," which means to effect a purpose through particular principles and procedure.

> Practice is to be distinguished not only from a mechanical process but also from the activity of a purposively organized being, whether it is aware of its activity or not. For in this case also the purpose is not actualized "on the basis of" a representation of the purpose and means appropriate to it.[9]

For Kant, the characteristic of a human being through which he is capable of purposive activity is called "will." Therefore "practical" also means everything "which is sufficient to determine the will."[10] Reason is practical if it contains sufficient grounds for the will to actualize a particular purpose. In contrast to the Aristotelian sense of practice, practical in the moral sense is based not on theory or any mechanical process, but on human freedom. Kant claims that

> the power of choice that can be determined independently of sensible impulses and hence through motivating causes that are presented only by reason is called the *free power of choice* (*arbitrium liberum*); and everything connected with

[8] Ibid., p. 113.
[9] Dieter Henirich, "Ethics of Autonomy," *The Unity of Reason: Essays on Kant's Philosophy*, ed. and with an introduction by Richard L. Velkley, England/ London: Harvard University Press, 1994, p. 93.
[10] *Critique of Practical Reason*, in Immanuel Kant, *Critique of Practical Reason and Other Writings in Moral Philosophy*, trans. by L. W. Beck, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1949, p.130.

this free power of choice, whether as basis or as consequence, is called *practical*. (*CPR*, A 802/B 830)

As explained in the above passage, what kind of actions deserves to be called practical depends on whether the action is determined and motivated by the free power of choice when one chooses to adopt moral laws instead of an evil maxim. The free power of choice is a power that is not affected by any sensible stimulus, but imposes moral laws a priori by reason. Thus, moral laws are indeed pure practical laws, and hence they belong to the practical use of reason. Pure practical laws are contrasted with pragmatic laws, which just aim at attaining the purposes imposed on us by the senses. Therefore, those pragmatic laws are not pure, i.e., not determined completely a priori, but empirical in nature.

As shown above, Kant's definition of the practical and his understanding of practical reason is different from David Hume. Hume believes that moral decision cannot be motivated by reason. Emotions have an influence on our actions and affections, but reason can never have any such influences. Reason, for Hume, is nothing but calculative rationality. And "reason is the discovery of truth or falsehood. Truth or falsehood consists in an agreement or disagreement either to the real relations of ideas, or to real existence and matter of fact."[11] Whatever is incapable of this agreement or disagreement is also incapable of being true or false, and can never be an object of our reason. It is evident that our passions, volitions, and actions, are not capable of any such agreement or disagreement, so it is impossible that they can be either true or false, and contrary or conformable to reason. According to Hume, this

[11] David Hume, *A Treatise of Hume Nature*, ed. by L. A. Selby-Bigge, London: Oxford University Press, 1958, p. 458.

shows that actions neither derive their merit from the conformity to reason, nor their blame from a contrariety to it; and it also shows that reason can never immediately prevent or produce any action by contradicting or approving it. Therefore, reason cannot be the source of the distinction between moral good and evil.[12] Laudable or blamable are not the same as reasonable or unreasonable. Moral distinction and decision are therefore not motivated by reason. In a word, reason is inactive.

In contrast to Hume, Kant maintains that reason is a source of actions. He thinks that reason can be practical and determine our will to perform moral actions independent of everything empirical. Reason contains a sufficient practical ground to determine our volition. Pure practical reason can impose moral law which is the formal determining basis of human actions. In a morally good will, the moral law itself becomes the incentive of moral actions. According to Kant, if reason cannot be the source of actions, then the incentives driving the will come and go, producing oscillations of mood and vacillations in motives.[13] As a result, the man in this predicament will be morally lost because no reliable guides are available to him.

c) Reason's Interest

Kant defines "interest" of a faculty of mind as "a principle that contains the condition under which alone the power's exercise is further" (*CPrR*, 5: 119). In the passage "On the Primacy," Kant explicitly suggests that practical reason has primacy in its

[12] Ibid.
[13] Rex Patrick Stevens, "Moral Incentives and Moral Self-Criticism," *Kant on Moral Practice: A Study of Moral success and Failure*, Macon: Mercer University Press, 1981, p. 40.

linkage with pure speculative reason. And this linkage is by no means contingent and discretionary, but based a priori on reason (*CPrR*, 5: 121). Kant emphasizes that we cannot conceive that pure practical reason is subordinate to speculative reason because he thinks that all interest is ultimately practical. The interest of speculative reason is only conditional and can be completed in practical use. Although Kant asserts that to every power of mind we can attribute an interest, Kant does not discuss the role, nature and characteristic of the "interest" in detail. When Kant uses the term "interest," he does not refer to one's subjective and personal wishes, but rather to the essential purposes of human reason (*teleologia rationis humanae*) (*CPR*, A 839/B 867). Briefly speaking, human reason's interest aims at providing an architectonic unity to a philosophical system by linking up the theoretical and practical parts of a philosophy.

"Interest" and "end" in common language are quite similar concepts, though there are significant differences between them. According to Gilliland, the notion of interest is broader than the notion of end. The term "interest" captures more fully the phenomena of rational volition, encompassing not only end (the conceptual representation that directs towards a potential goal) but also the phenomenal feel of volition (the drive or attraction of the will towards a particular end).[14] However, Gilliland suggests that the notion of interest can at the same time be narrower than the notion of end in another sense since it is related to a very specific type of end, namely the ultimate aim of human reason's destiny. As stated above, an interest is a principle that can be ascribed to every faculty of the soul and contains the condition

[14] Rex Gilliland, "Kant's Doctrine of the Primacy of Pure Practical Reason and the Problem of a Uniitary System of Philosophy," in *Kant und die Aufklärung: Akten des 9. Internationalen Kant-Kongress*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002, p. 31.

under which alone the exercise of this faculty can be carried out. Yet, "[s]ome ends of a faculty are not part of its interest: According to Kant, maintaining consistency is a necessary condition for any use of reason, but is not part of the interest of reason because it does not extend reason's scope."[15] The interest of speculative reason consists in the knowledge of objects and the systematic unity of cognitions, whereas the interest of practical reason lies in the determination of the will (*CPrR*, 5: 120). Both the interests of speculative and practical reason belong to a unitary system of philosophy. Philosophy as a system, which consists of metaphysics of nature and metaphysics of morals, is for Kant a goal-directed activity. Yovel states it clearly that,

> To understand a philosophical system in a rational way, we have to understand it in view of the "unifying goal" that runs through all the parts and gives them architectonic, that is, rationally-teleological unity. Moreover, the unifying goal must not be borrowed from external interest—political, theological, aesthetic, technological, etc. The goal must be set by reason's interest itself and should express its nature as the pursuit of ends which are inherently rational, rather than as a mere instrument for promoting goals that are set beforehand by other interests.[16]

Human reason is not merely a means, but also an end in itself. That's why Yovel claims that human reason's instrumental capacity — the power to calculate, to infer, to foresee, to design a strategy and to adjust means to an end — should be in the services of its own interests, the immanent ends which human reason sets to itself.

Following Onora O' Neill, Michalson regards the nature of reason's interest as a need

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[15] Ibid.

[16] Yimiyahu Yovel, "The Interests of Reason: From Metaphysics to Moral History," *Kant's Practical Philosophy Reconsidered*, ed. by Yimiyahu Yovel, London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1989, p. 136.

metaphorically. In the beginning of the "Transcendental Doctrine of Method," Kant observes that

> we assessed the building equipment available to us, and determined for what edifice—and for what height and firmness thereof—the equipment suffices. We found, to be sure, that although we had in mind to build a tower that was to reach to heaven, yet our supply of materials sufficed only for a dwelling just spacious enough for us to survey these tasks. But we found that through lack of material the bold enterprise had to fail—even if one leaves out of account the language confusion that inevitably had to disunite the workers concerning the plan, and to scatter them all over the world to build [dwellings] separately—each according to his own design. Here we are concerned not so much with the materials, as rather with the plan. And since we have been warned not to venture upon this task in accordance with an arbitrary and blindly chosen design that might perhaps surpass our entire power, and yet cannot well abstain from erecting a firm residence, we must make our projection for such a building in relation to that supply which is both given to us and is adequate for our need. (*CPR*, A 707/B 735)

According to the interpretation of O' Neill, Kant employs a metaphor of construction to emphasize the speculative modesty of his results, and the quality and nature of reason itself.[17] Reason should be aware of its power and limits. This can only be achieved through a "critique" of reason itself. The possibility of undertaking the "critique" presupposes the distinction between "materials" and "plan" associated with the building project. Kant insists that our problem has not just to do with materials, but also with the plan. It means that we not only have to plan our building with the pure a priori concepts, but also have to fulfill our reason's needs. Reason is fully aware of its needs and interest, thus undoubtedly, reason is and must be its own

[17] Gordon E. Michalson, JR, "Reason's Interest," *Kant and the Problem of God*, Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1999, p. 80.

authority.[18] Kant's own philosophical system is rational precisely because it is not imposed by any external agent. Thus, Michalson concludes that reason's structure reveals the activity of "self-structuring" with regard to the metaphor. This activity of self-structuring, in turn, discloses the ultimate goal of autonomy's vocation, which will assuredly be a genuinely autonomous result because the original plan was self given by the need and interest of reason itself.

d) Two Perspectives of the Problem of the Primacy

Although there are no inherent conflicts between the two uses of reason, they are always in danger of conflict if their respective interests are neglected by each other (*CPrR*, 5: 143). Failure in resolving the conflict within reason endangers the soundness of reason. Thus, we need an ultimate principle to safeguard all our rational interests. In the passages "On the Primacy," Kant distinguishes between two senses of primacy, a general and a narrower practical sense of primacy. Primacy in general is defined by Kant as the prerogative of one thing to be the first determining ground of the others. Practical primacy refers to the prerogative of the interest of practical reason by virtue of which others are subordinated to it (*CPrR*, 5: 119). We can use the concepts of subordination and coordination to explain Kant's concept of primacy. Coordination is a relation of mutual independence, whereas subordination is a relation of one-sided dependence. Primacy, for Kant, is a type of subordination relationship. Theoretical and practical reason are not co-ordinate. If they were co-ordinate, anything about the practical could not be admitted into the theoretical

[18] Onora O' Neill, *Construction of Reason: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 13-14.

domain. To assert the primacy of practical reason means that speculative reason must accept the propositions on which the interest of practical reason depends necessarily. To say that practical reason has primacy is to identify pure practical reason as the ground for the relation between the two uses of reason.

This paper is primarily concerned with the narrower sense of primacy, namely practical primacy. We will show the primacy of the practical from two perspectives. The first refers to an overarching conception of the nature and method of Critical philosophy, which is about the unity, "interest," and teleology of reason as a whole in Kant's philosophy.[19] In this respect, primacy of the practical consists in the thesis that the use of our reason in general is fundamentally practical rather than theoretical. It entails that philosophy finds its ultimate ground, purpose in moral consciousness. Thus, practical reason has superiority over theoretical reason, not just from its own point of view, but also from that of theoretical reason. The second part of this paper will demonstrate how theoretical and practical reason can be united and how their respective products harmonize with each other.

Another conception of practical primacy refers to the primacy of the practical in the realm of pure rational faith. It makes the following claim: When reflecting upon the conditions of morality, one's concern is to reconcile the metaphysical claims and the postulates of the practical use of reason with the speculative one.[20] To say that the metaphysical claims of practical reason have primacy means that reason can postulate the reality of immortality of the soul, freedom of the will and existence of

[19] Sebastian Gardner, "The Primacy of Practical Reason," *A Companion to Kant*, ed. by Graham Bird, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, p. 259.
[20] Frederick Rauscher, "Kant's Two Priorities of Practical Reason," *BJHP* 6(3), 1998, p. 398.

God although speculative reason can neither confirm nor deny them. In this respect, primacy of the practical refers to the philosophical principle of and the argument for moral theology in Kant's philosophy.[21] The primacy of practical reason in this sense plays an important role since it is located mid-way between the argument for the highest good as a key to resolving the antinomy of practical reason and the argument for the existence of God and immortality of the soul as conditions for the realization of the highest good.[22]

Indeed, many Kant's scholars including Gardner, Kneller, Gilliland and Ameriks also interpret the primacy of the practical from the two perspectives described above. Gilliland invents the term "teleological primacy," which indicates the primacy of the ends and volitions of the will.[23] He claims that when Kant asserts that speculative reason must accept the practical postulates, it indicates that speculative reason must be at the same time subordinate to the practical interest of pure reason. This implies the need to maintain the unity of reason, which entails the teleological primacy of pure practical reason.[24] From this, the conception of the teleological primacy is compatible with the first perspective on the primacy of the practical described above. Moreover, Kneller and Ameriks' understanding of the primacy of the practical reason directly correspond to the two viewpoints on the primacy proposed above.[25] Both of

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[21] Sebastian Gardner, "The Primacy of Practical Reason," *A Companion to Kant*, ed. by Graham Bird, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, p. 259.
[22] Ibid., p. 260.
[23] Rex Gilliland, "Kant's Doctrine of the Primacy of Pure Practical Reason and the Problem of a Uniitary System of Philosophy," in *Kant und die Aufklärung: Akten des 9. Internationalen Kant-Kongress*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002, p. 39.
[24] Ibid., p. 35.
[25] It is worth noting that Ameriks proposes a third way of understanding of the practical primacy. It refers to a methodological procedure for the achievement of a social contract theory. Yet, this understanding brings a number of criticisms. First, it downgrades the importance of the theory of knowledge in Kant's philosophy. Second, it totally ignores the work of the third *Critique* and the importance of the reflective concept of purpose as a key to uniting theoretical and practical reason. For the detail about the criticisms, see Jane Kneller, "Aesthetic Value and the Primacy of the Practical

them argue that pure practical reason has primacy because it alone reveals what is of unconditional interest and value, namely the moral will. Also, it reveals the ultimate destiny of human reason, which refers to the interest and unity of reason.

in Kant's Philosophy," in *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 36, 2002, p. 371-3.

II. Unity and Teleology of Reason as a whole

a) Preliminary

i) Unity of Reason and Moral Theology

Kant claims that his system can be divided into metaphysics of nature and metaphysics of moral. And the respective products of the two parts, namely nature and freedom, are ultimately presented in a unified system. It means that, for Kant, there is only one single philosophical system, rather than two or even more. In the first *Critique*, Kant emphasizes that human reason is by virtue of its nature architectonic. It means that human reason regards all cognitions as belonging to a possible system. It does not permit any branches of a philosophy that would be incompatible with other parts in the system (*CPR*, A 474/B 502). That's why Kant claims that

> Now the legislation of human reason (philosophy) has two objects, nature and freedom. It thus contains natural laws as well as moral law, initially in two separate philosophical systems but ultimately in a single such system. The philosophy of nature concerns everything that *is*, the philosophy of morals concerns only what *ought to be*. (*CPR*, A 840/B 868)[26]

[26] Indeed, Kant proposes a similar task in the *Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals*, while discussing the relationship between the first and the second *Critiques*, Kant states that "the critique of a pure practical reason, if it is to be carried through completely, be able at the same time to present the unity of practical with speculative reason in a common principle, since there can, in the end, be only one and the same reason, which must be distinguished merely in its application." *GMM*, 4: 391.

In the problem of the unity of reason, the primacy of practical reason consists in the thesis that the use of reason is fundamentally practical rather than theoretical. Kant thinks that morality constitutes the truest, most rational expression of practical reason. From this, this dimension regarding the practical primacy entails that philosophy finds its ultimate ground, purpose, and guiding norm in morality.[27] Kant insists that morality is the sole subject to unite practical and speculative reason since reason can only be completed in its moral use, towards which other inquiries are directed. In the Architectonic, Kant states that the systematic unity of philosophy arises from the relation of essential ends in the faculty of reason. The ultimate end, to which all other ends of reason are subordinate, is moral philosophy.[28] But, at the same time, Kant maintains that theology has an equal standing to morality. And both of them belong to one philosophical system. "[Thus] theology and morality were the two incentives—or, better yet, points of reference—for all abstract rational investigations to which people have afterwards at all times devoted themselves." (*CPR*, A 853/B 881) According to Kleingeld, there are two respects in which practical reason reaches beyond the theoretical reason in the problem of the unity of reason,[29] i.e., the belief in the harmony between morality and nature and the belief in the existence of God are justified unconditionally from the moral point of view. The former belief is about the problem of the unity of reason, whereas the latter is about moral theology. Hence, it shows that succeeding in the proof of the unity of reason presupposes the justification of the problem of practical primacy in moral theology.

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[27] Sebastian Gardner, "The Primacy of Practical Reason," *A Companion to Kant*, ed. by Graham Bird, Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2006, p. 261.

[28] Rex Gilliland, "Kant's Doctrine of the Primacy of Pure Practical Reason and the Problem of a Uniitary System of Philosophy," in *Kant und die Aufklärung: Akten des 9. Internationalen Kant-Kongress*, Berlin: de Gruyter, 2002, p. 29.

[29] Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant on the Unity of Theoretical and Practical Reason," *The Review of Metaphysics* 52, Dec 1998, p. 334.

ii) An Inconsistency presented in *Groundwork* and the Second *Critique*

Yet, the task of showing the unity of reason does not seem to proceed smoothly. In some passages, Kant seems to contradict his doctrine that theoretical and practical reason are two different applications of one and the same reason. In the *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant admits that

> the critique of a pure practical reason, if it is to be carried through completely, be able at the same time to present the unity of practical with speculative reason in a common principle, since there can, in the end, be only one and the same reason, which must be distinguished merely in its application. *But I could not yet bring it to such completeness here without bringing into it considerations of a wholly different kind and confusing the reader.* Because of this I have made use of the title *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals* instead of *Critique of Practical reason.* (*GMM*, 4: 391. Italic mine.)

We note that Kant reserves the task of demonstrating the unity of reason for the *Critique of Practical Reason.* However, in the second *Critique*, Kant further postpones the attempt. In the "Analytic of Pure Practical Reason," Kant admits that

> someone who has been able to convince himself of the propositions occurring in the Analytic, such comparisons will be gratifying; for *they righty prompt the expectation of perhaps being able some day to attain insight into the unity of the entire pure power of reason (theoretical as well as practical) and to derive everything from one principle*—this being the unavoidable need of human reason, which finds full satisfaction only in a completely systematic unity of its cognition. (*CPrR*, 5: 91. Italic mine.)

It can be seem from the above passages that Kant still cannot demonstrate the unity of reason successfully in the second *Critique*. Indeed, many Kantians argue that Kant does not give a coherent account of the unity of theoretical and practical reason at all in the critical period. Some claim that the unity of theoretical philosophy and practical philosophy, and the unity of reason have not been demonstrated before the publication of the third *Critique*. Henry Allison argues that before the third *Critique*, Kant defends "a rigid separation between the realms of freedom and nature," whereas in the third *Critique*, he "now insists on the necessity of a mediating concept (the purposiveness of nature), which would make possible the transition from the concept of nature to the concept of freedom."[30]

Based on the first and second *Critiques*, Susan Neiman attempts to show that theoretical and practical reason possess a unified structure and operate according to common principles. On her view, the unity of practical and theoretical reason can be accounted for by the fact that they share the same essential nature and structure and perform similar activities. And Gardner supports Neiman that the Transcendental Method of the first *Critique*, especially "The Discipline of Pure Reason" and "The Canon of Pure Reason," can be read in a practical conception. Yet, Kleingeld thinks that showing that two things perform similar activities or use similar ideas is not a sufficient reason to prove that they are one and the same thing. In my opinion, Kleingeld's account of the unity of reason is much more convincing than that of Neiman. The following discussion will show that Kant is able to demonstrate the unity of reason in the first and second *Critiques*, but the problem how the respective products of theoretical and practical reason (nature and

[30] Henry Allison, "The Gulf between Nature and Freedom and Nature's Guarantee of Perpetual Peace," *Proceedings of the Eighth International Kant Congress*, ed. Hoke Robinson, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995, p. 37-8.

freedom) are in harmony cannot be fully solved until the publication of the third *Critique*.

b) Arguments for the Unity of Reason in the First and Second *Critiques*

i) Argument from Similarity

Neiman argues for the unity of reason by providing an analysis of the functions Kant ascribes to theoretical and practical reason. She stresses that by appealing to the similarities between the two uses of reason, we can prove the unity of reason successfully. The most noticeable similarity between them is that practical reason, like theoretical reason, has a tendency to illusion. When speculative reason attempts to extend beyond the boundary of possible experience, illusion arises. Reason's misuse is that it does not cease to guide pure understanding to its transcendental use. Pure understanding's transcendental use means that its principles are applied to things as such and in themselves, rather than applied to appearances empirically. That's why Kant claims that "*transcendental illusion*, which influences principles whose use is not even designed for experience … Rather, transcendental illusion carries us, even despite all the warnings issued by critique, entirely beyond the empirical use of the categories and puts us off with the deception of there being an expansion of *pure understanding*" (*CPR*, A 295/B 352). Yet, the illusion is not something that reason can avoid. Kant admits that this dialectic is not one in which a bungler might become entangled on his own through lack of knowledge, or one a sophist has devised artificially in order to confuse reasonable

people. "It is, rather, a dialectic that *attaches* to human reason *unpreventably* and that, even after we have uncovered this deception, still will not stop hoodwinking and thrusting reason incessantly into momentary aberrations that always need to be removed." (*CPR*, A 298/B 355) Similarly, practical reason falls into illusion when there is a conflict between duty and inclination. Kant thinks that human beings as rational beings will obey moral laws imposed by the practical reason. This is an internal lawgiving action, rather than something given by external lawgivers. At the same time, Kant does not deny that human beings have a lot of desires and can be affected by external sensible impulses. Thus, there are conflicts between duty and inclination when a person struggles between fulfilling his duty and desires. In the *Groundwork*, Kant claims that

> The human being feels within himself a powerful counterweight to all the commands of duty, which reason represents to him as so deserving of the highest respect—the counterweight of his needs and inclinations, the entire satisfaction of which he sums up under the name happiness. Now reason issues its precepts unremittingly, without thereby promising anything to the inclinations, and so, as it were, with disregard and contempt for those claims, which are so impetuous and besides so apparently equitable (and refuse to be neutralized by any command). But from this there arises a *natural dialectic*, that is, a propensity to rationalize against those strict laws of duty and to cast doubt upon their validity, or at least upon their purity and strictness. (*GMM*, 4: 405)

Nevertheless, just mentioning that both employments of reason have a natural and unavoidable tendency to illusion is not a strong evidence for the unity of reason. Indeed, it is just an apparent similarity between speculative and practical reason. In fact, we might argue that there are many differences between practical and theoretical reason so as to show that they do not possess a unified structure. The greater the differences

between theoretical and practical reason, the less plausible is practical reason's claim to be a form of reason at all. Understanding this difficulty, Neiman tries to provide an answer to Kant's question, "How can pure reason be practical?" in order to explain the unified structure of reason. According to her view, if reason as a whole is regulative rather than cognitive, providing ends, standards and heuristic principles for activity, rather than providing knowledge, then the question of how pure reason can be practical becomes less puzzling. It is because theoretical reason in this sense is already practical, concerned not with contemplation but with guiding us to realize its ideas.[31] Just like theoretical reason tries to bring all empirical conditions to a systematic unity, practical reason uses three ideas, which are the immortality of soul, the freedom of the will and the existence of God, to construct an idea of an intelligible moral world. Theoretical reason strives for the systematic unity of knowledge, whereas practical reason strives for the systematic order of our maxims for action. Yet, we can challenge Neiman that though both of the theoretical and practical reason uses ideas for guidance, their aims are extremely different. While theoretical reason aims at a systematic knowledge, practical reason aims at constructing an idea of a realm of ends. How should we deal with the differences between the theoretical and the practical? Are there any other similarities by which we can prove the unity of reason?

Neiman admits that there are indeed many differences between the practical and theoretical reason, but how to interpret the differences between them makes a great difference to the problem of the unity of reason and the primacy of the practical. She argues that though there are many differences between the two uses of reason, they should not be understood as differences in their essential nature but just as differences

[31] Susan Neiman, "The Primacy of the Practical," *The Unity of Reason*, New/ Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 126.

about the world in which they are applied.[32] The essential natures and immanent structure of reason lie in their regulative power. The fact that they share the same structure is the key to solving the problem of the unity of reason.

ii) Primacy of the Practical in the First and Second *Critiques*

Kant's view on the primacy of the practical in the problem of unity of reason just rests on his claim that all interest is ultimately practical (*CPrR*, 5: 121). Neiman is aware that this claim is insufficient to defend the primacy of practical reason. It is because this claim can only make sense if we just understand the term "practical" in a weak sense, which means an object that is possible through freedom (*CPrR*, 5: 57). This understanding of "practical" is unhelpful because we can challenge that even in the realm of science we depend on the free use of regulative principles too, practical reason has no monopoly of employing the regulative principles of reason. We can understand "the claim that every interest is ultimately practical to be a reference to the regulative, end-positing character of reason as a whole; but in failing to show the differences in reason's areas of activity, this would be useless in explaining Kant's claim that practical reason is primary."[33] Rather, Neiman appeals to Kant's assertion that the only unconditioned good is a good will in the *Groundwork*, where he claims that "[i]t is impossible to think of anything at all in the world, or indeed even beyond it, that could be considered good without limitation except a **good will**." (*GMM*, 4: 393)[34] Theoretical inquiry is a conditional

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[32] Ibid.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Indeed, Kant sometimes distinguishes between two senses of the word "Will," i.e. between *Wille* (*voluntas*) ('will' in a narrower sense) and *Willkür* (*arbitrium*, for which the conventional English translation is "choice"). In *The Metaphysics of Morals*, Kant claims that "laws proceed from will, *maxims* from choice. In man the latter is a free choice; the will, which is directed to nothing beyond

good while moral action is not. Kant thinks that morality is more important than science. It does not mean that what sciences are doing is futile. Rather, what Kant emphasizes is that it is practical reason that gives meaning to the universe as a whole. This is a claim that can be only justified by the foundational belief in the unconditioned goodness of the will.[35] It is a major reason why practical reason has a superior status.

On the other hand, Neiman states that practical reason not only exhibits itself more strongly than theoretical reason, but it is also the freest power in creating its own objects. Indeed, in the first and second *Critiques*, Kant does mention that reason is constitutive in the practical realm and can allow us to go beyond the boundary of possible experience. It means that practical reason can expand beyond the reach of speculative reason. He claims that

> there is a use of pure reason which is practical and absolutely necessary (viz., its moral use). When used practically, pure reason inevitably expands and reaches beyond the bounds of sensibility; and although it does not require for this help from speculative pure reason, it must still be assured against interference from it in order not to fall into contradiction with itself. (*CPR*, B xxv)

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the law itself, cannot be called either free or unfree, since it is not directed to actions but immediately to giving laws for the maxims of actions (and is, therefore, practical reason itself). Hence the will directs with absolute necessity and is itself subject to no necessitation. Only *choice* can therefore be called *free*." (*MS*, 6: 226) As "will" in the narrow sense, rational beings are the legislators of laws. It is "the faculty of desire considered not so much in relation to action (as choice is) but rather in relation to the ground determining choice to action" (*MS*, 6: 213). Thus, "will" (**in the narrower sense**) is what makes it the case that "will" (**in the broader sense**, encompassing both *Wille* and *Willkür*) can be identified with the faculty of practical reason itself. "Will" in the narrow sense is neither free nor unfree because it does not choose one thing or another. It simply presents to choice the reason or ground for choosing this rather than that. As "choice," rational beings are subject to laws. "Choice" is free because it is able to and motivated to follow moral laws even when it is tempted not to follow it. What "choice" chooses are maxims, or subjective principles, which may or may not conform to the laws given by "will" (*Wille*). When "choice" is tempted not to obey the moral laws, but is inwardly constrained to do so, it is constrained by (its own) *will*, and that is what makes it *autonomous* in obeying the moral laws.

[35] Susan Neiman, "The Primacy of the Practical," *The Unity of Reason*, New/ Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 127.

And in another passage, Kant claims that practical reason is superior because it is "stronger"; the word "stronger" does not mean that practical reason is a higher cognitive faculty than theoretical reason. Instead, it means that practical reason is much freer than theoretical reason since the latter one is restricted to guide understanding to form a systematic unity of its manifold cognition, whereas practical reason can make its objects actual. That's why in the second *Critique*, Kant claims that

> pure theoretical reason dealt with cognition of the objects that may be given to the understanding; it therefore had to start from *intuition* and hence (since intuition is always sensible) from sensibility … Practical reason, by contrast, deals not with objects in order to *cognize* them but with its own power *to make them actual* (in conformity with the cognition of them), i.e., with a *will*, which is a causality insofar as reason containing the determining basis thereof. (*CPrR*, 5: 89)

Yet, the claims that reason is constitutive in the practical realm and practical reason can actualize its objects might give rise to some misunderstandings. First of all, one might misunderstand that practical reason can extend our knowledge further than theoretical reason. When we say that practical reason is superior, one might mistake it as a power that can attain intellectual cognition. From this, some might misunderstand that our cognition can actually expand beyond the boundary of possible experience by pure practical reason. Another possible misunderstanding is to think that practical reason can demonstrate the objective reality of freedom. In the second *Critique*, Kant seems to support this idea. He asserts that

> All other concepts (those of God and immortality) that, as mere idea, remain unsupported in speculative reason now attach themselves to the concept of freedom and acquire, with it and through it, stability and objective reality. I.e., their *possibility* is *proved* by freedom's being actual, for this idea reveals itself through the moral law … freedom, among all the ideas of speculative reason, is also the

> only one whose possibility we *know* a priori … practical reason, on its own and without having made an agreement with speculative reason, now provides a suprasensible object of the category of causality, namely *freedom*, with reality … thus it confirms by a fact what in the speculative critique could only be *thought*. (*CPrR*, 5: 4-6)

In the above passage, Kant seems to claim that the immortality of the soul, freedom of the will and the existence of God can be cognized by practical reason although theoretical reason fails to do so. However, in my opinion, the idea that practical reason has access to a peculiar and superior kind of knowledge is highly problematic. And if Kant really allows a kind of knowledge that is not a product of sensibility and understanding, then Kant would contradict the theory he established in the first *Critique*. He thinks that a pure cognition can expand practically because pure practical reason has its object that is given a priori and independent of any theoretical principles. The object is presented as practically necessary. It is the highest good, i.e., happiness distributed to persons exactly in proportion to their morality. Highest good determines the will directly. In order to realize the highest good through the practical laws, the immortality of the soul, freedom of the will and the existence of God must be postulated. It is true that our cognition can be expanded by pure practical reason, but all these must be taken in a *practical* or *moral* sense. We cannot know the nature of our soul, the intelligible world or the supreme being as to what they are in themselves. We can just unit these concepts in the practical concept of the highest good as the object of pure practical reason. The three postulates cannot be known just because there are no corresponding intuitions. Though it seems that theoretical reason can be expanded by the guide of practical reason, this expansion is not an expansion of speculation, that is, no positive use can be made of it for a theoretical aim (*CPrR*, 5: 134). Kant thus asserts that the three postulates "are not theoretical dogmas but *presupposition* from a necessarily practical point of view, hence

although they do not expand theoretical cognition, they do give objective reality to the ideas of speculative reason by means of their reference to the practical sphere…" (*CPrR*, 5: 132). The last possible misunderstanding is to think that practical reason can actualize some objects, although theoretical reason fails to do so. Practical reason cannot actualize any objects spontaneously. We say that it can actualize objects, the "objects" are nothing but the moral acting that moral laws command us to do. When our power of desire is determined by reason, we adopt a moral law, and then we act in accordance with the moral law. In this sense, moral objects are actualized.[36]

iii) Other Considerations for the Unity of Reason

On the other hand, Konhardt agrees with Neiman that within the first and second *Critiques*, the unity of reason can be demonstrated. Also, just like as Neiman, he tries to mention similarities between the practical and theoretical reason in order to prove the

[36] Kant's distinctions of "transcendental freedom" and "practical freedom," and "practical freedom" in a negative sense and "practical freedom" in a positive sense can help understand in what sense moral beings are free and in what sense practical reason can actualize objects. "Transcendental freedom" is a special kind of causality, conceived metaphysically as the capacity to begin a causal series from itself independent of any prior causes (*CPR*, A533/ B561). In the first *Critique*, Kant explicitly claims that we cannot demonstrate the objective reality of transcendental freedom since it surpasses the realm of possible experiences. "Practical freedom," on the other hand, is the freedom we ascribe to ourselves when we think of ourselves as acting, especially when we think of ourselves as moral agents. It involves "a *will*, which is a causality insofar as reason contains the determining ground" (*CPrR*, 5: 89). Kant distinguishes two different concepts of practical freedom, a "negative" and a "positive" one. We have practical freedom in the negative sense if it is a power of choice that is independent of necessitation through impulses of sensibility (*CPR*, A534/ B562), independent of alien causes determining it (*GMM*, 4: 446), or "independent of being determined by sensuous impulses" (*MS*, 6: 213-4). Practical freedom in the positive sense is possession of a capacity to follow determinate laws given by the faculty of reason, or "the ability of reason to be itself practical" (*MS*, 6: 214). It involves the capacity to act for reasons, rather than only on the basis of feelings, impulses, or desire that might occur independently of reasons. Moral agents can act for reasons means that they can explain what they do. If we think that we have good reasons to act in a certain way, and if we have the strength of will not to be seduced away from acting on what we take to be such good reasons, then those reasons make it certain that we will act in such a way. And objects can be actualized in a sense that we act for certain reasons. But even in those cases, reasons never deprive us of the possibility of doing otherwise. We can always act contrary to them. In that sense, every being that acts for reasons is a free being.

unity of reason. Konhardt claims that practical reason is normative; its interest is not in knowledge, but in the realization of its ideas. The correct use of theoretical reason does not aim at acquiring knowledge too, but rather guiding and grounding our cognitive activity.[37] This role can also be seen as a normative one. If theoretical reason functions properly, rather than attempting to acquire knowledge of objects beyond the boundary of possible experience, it does not construct any knowledge. It turns out that both practical and theoretical reason are regulative or normative. The superiority of the practical reason is based on that theoretical reason's success is dependent on the cooperation of the world; by contrast, practical reason can achieve its ends alone. Rational beings, being parts of the world of sense, are subject to the laws of causality, but at the same time, as rational agents, they can determine their will. That's why practical reason is able to realize its objects. Every time we act in accordance with the moral laws, we are creating a moral world. Thus, moral laws and our pure will are self-sufficient. Kant states that

> Now if we compare with this Analytic [Analytic of pure practical reason] the analytical part of the critique of pure speculative reason, we can see a noteworthy contrast between the two. Not principles but pure sensible *intuition* (space and time) was there the first datum that made a priori cognition possible, although only for objects of the senses … On the other hand, although the moral law does not provide us with a *prospect*, it nonetheless provides us with a fact that is absolutely inexplicable from any data of the world of sense and from the entire range of our theoretical use of reason … The sensible nature of rational beings in general is there is their existence under empirically conditioned laws, and hence is, for reason, *heteronomy*. The suprasensible nature of the same beings, on the other hand, is their existence according to laws that are independent of any empirical condition and that hence belong to the *autonomy* of pure reason. (*CPrR*, 5: 42-3)

And in the first *Critique*, he also claims that

[37] Susan Neiman, "The Primacy of the Practical," *The Unity of Reason*, New/ Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 127.

> The world insofar as it would be in accordance with all moral laws (as, indeed, according to the *freedom* of rational beings it *can* be, and as according to the necessary laws of *morality* it ought to be) I call a **moral world** … the moral world is a mere idea; yet it is a practical idea that actually can and ought to have its influence on the world of sense, in order to bring this world as much as possible into accordance on the moral world. Hence the idea of a moral world has objective reality. But it has such reality not as dealing with an object of an intelligible intuition ([a way for this idea to have object reality] we cannot even think), but as dealing with the world of sense. (*CPR*, A 808/B 836)

Kant holds that theoretical and practical reason are unified in a common principle in the sense that both of them aim to realize its ideas by regulative principle, and at the same time, maintains that practical reason has superior power. Both theoretical and practical reason aim at the idea of Unconditioned, providing principles that guide us in the search for systematic unity.

On the other hand, Lewis White Beck also notices the two incompatible passages from the *Groundwork* and second *Critique* that we have discussed above. Beck attempts to show the unity of reason within the first and second *Critiques*. First, reason as such is a faculty of principles. On Beck's view, the necessity of valid practical principles must be derived from universal and necessary principles of reason itself; otherwise the internal unity of practice would be lost.[38] In other words, reason can supply universal and necessary principles. Beck's attempt is to answer the question how reason can be practical in order to prove the unity of reason. It means that since all the moral principles are derived from reason's principles, reason can be practical. Beck goes on pointing out

[38] Lewis White Beck, "Name, Purpose, and Structure of the "Critique": Commentary on Preface and Introduction," *A commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963, p. 47-8.

that practically, moral laws are divisive instead of unifying. But, Beck thinks that reason serves the same function in the practical as in the theoretical realm, namely the function of "systematizing, integrating, universalizing, and rendering necessary what appears prima facie to be contingent."[39] He endeavors to show that there is only one faculty, reason, which can be employed in two different ways. Moreover, Beck thinks that there is a transition of the tasks or functions of reason between the first and the second *Critiques*. He thinks that in the first *Critique* Kant just only applies the idea of reason as a faculty of principles to theoretical reason because he has not yet clearly conceived of the problem of moral autonomy. Beck suggests a developmental reading of Kant's first and second *Critiques*, based on a passage in the preface to the second *Critique*, where Kant claims that "the possibility [of God and Immortality], which previously was only a problem and here becomes an assertion, and thus connects the practical use of reason with the elements of the theoretical use" (*CPrR*, 5: 5). Beck reads it as a transition from theoretical realm to practical realm.[40] In the theoretical realm, the use of ideas is regulative, but if theoretical reason functions improperly, it tends to make mistakes of being constitutive in an intelligible world. If it is so, we will fall into fallacies such as paralogisms and antinomies. In the practical realm, the idea of freedom becomes constitutive because it is the condition of our moral laws and the theological postulates, i.e., the ideas of God and immortality. Beck sees the change in uses of ideas in different realms as a transitional process. It is the same reason that transits from the one realm to another. He explicitly states that "[t]he *same* reason, following our demands for unconditional conditions for every motive and for the unity of motives in a pattern of life,

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[39] Ibid., p. 48.

[40] Edward Caird also holds the developmental interpretation of the unity of reason. He claims that "[j]ust because reason cannot find its ideal [of necessary and universal systematic unity] realized in the world, it seeks to realize that ideal for itself." See Edward Caird, *The Critical Philosophy of Immanuel Kant*, vol. 2, London and New York: Macmillan Co., 1909, p. 164.

is, on the contrary, an immanent reason, actually producing the objects to correspond to its ideas."[41]

Beck thinks that reason becomes practical through the process of transition from theory to practices. Beck believes that the opposition between theoretical and practical reason is just an apparent one. According to Beck, Kant presents the opposition just in order to emphasize the concept of duty, respect for law and virtue, and the distinction between knowledge and faith. However, Kleingeld criticizes that Beck's strategy still leaves two important questions unanswered. First of all, it fails to explain why Kant himself cannot be aware of this strategy to show the unity of reason. Secondly, it seems that Beck did not explain what justifies Kant's claim that there is only one and the same reason that is applied differently in the theoretical and practical domains. Indeed, reason does provide us with a priori principles in two different realms, but it does not follow that the unity of reason can thus be justified.

To sum up, the attempt to show the unity of theoretical and practical reason by addressing their similarity is failed. The next section will discuss a much more comprehensive account of the unity of reason and the primacy of the practical.

c) New Approach to the Unity of Reason

[41] Lewis White Beck, "Name, Purpose, and Structure of the "Critique": Commentary on Preface and Introduction," *A commentary on Kant's Critique of Practical Reason*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963, p. 48. Italic mine.

i) Failure in the Argument from Similarity

Many critics think that the unity of reason cannot be proved in the first two *Critiques*. Henry Allison argues that before the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant defends "a rigid separation between the realms of freedom and nature," whereas in the third *Critique*, "he now insists that on the necessity of a mediating concept (the purposiveness of nature), which would make possible the transition from the concept of nature to the concept of freedom."[42] On the other hand, Kleingeld criticizes Neiman's attempt to argue for the unity of reason based on the similarities between theoretical and practical reason. Kleingeld does not deny that those similarities certainly exist, but Neiman's argument is subject to at least two criticisms. Firstly, even though theoretical and practical reason share the use of the same ideas, it does not imply that the epistemic status of these ideas is the same in both cases.[43] Theoretical reason is entitled to use these ideas only as regulative principles to guide empirical investigations. By contrast, from a moral point of view, the ideas enjoy a much stronger epistemic status as practical postulates. The ideas of the soul, the world and God are regarded as supreme principles of the highest good in an intelligible world, though both of the highest good and the intelligible world are just practical ideas. Secondly, though Neiman has pointed out many similarities between theoretical and practical reason, it does not follow that they are different uses of one and the same reason. For example, we can show that two things perform similar activities, but this is not sufficient to prove that they are the same entity employed differently.

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[42] Henry Allison, "The Gulf between Nature and Freedom and Nature's Guarantee of Perpetual Peace," *Proceedings of the Eighth International Kant Congress*, ed. by Hoke Robinson, Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1995, p. 37-8.

[43] Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant on the Unity of Theoretical and Practical Reason," *The Review of Metaphysics* 52, Dec 1998, p. 315.

There could be two separate but similar faculties, each operating in its own sphere.[44] Theoretical and practical reason could be two similar kinds of reason, or two reasons, instead of two different employments of a single faculty. We have to provide other arguments to prove the unity of reason. Kleingeld reminds us that the problem of the unity of reason is not a problem of the identity of theoretical and practical reason. "Rather, the question is whether or not there is one faculty (reason) that is employed in two different ways (theoretically and practically). The argument from similarity does not suffice to answer this question"[45]

ii) Idea of a Fundamental Power as a Key to the Problem of the Unity of Reason

In fact, Kleingeld does not totally reject Neiman and Konhardt's attempt. She agrees with them that both theoretical and practical are regulative, but she thinks that this is not enough to prove the unity of reason. Thus, she introduces a new regulative reading of Kant's passages in order to solve the problem. Kleingeld suggests that the problem can be solved by taking Kant's statement that theoretical and practical reason are uses of one and the same reason as a regulative claim. She thinks that this new regulative reading "also makes it possible to reconstruct Kant's grounds for assuming the unity of reason before he has actually shown it."[46] Her main idea is to regard the idea of the soul as a fundamental power to give a ground for the unity of reason. Kleingeld thinks that this new regulative interpretation can *at least* reconcile the apparent inconsistent statements in the *Groundwork* and the second *Critique*.

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[44] Ibid.
[45] Ibid., p. 316.
[46] Ibid., p. 317-8.

First of all, what we have to do is to justify the use of regulative idea to solve the problem of the unity of reason. Indeed, Kant does call the "insight into the unity of the entire pure power of reason (theoretical as well as practical)" an "unavoidable need of human reason, which finds full satisfaction only in a completely systematic unity of its cognitions" (*CPrR*, 5: 91). As shown in this passage, at least, Kant believes that reason's interest in systematic unity can justify the use of regulative idea to solve the problem. Briefly speaking, Kleingeld suggests that we can regard the idea of the soul as the fundamental power of all other powers.[47] From this regulative idea, all other mental powers can be considered to be derived from it. When Kant discusses the idea of the soul in the Appendix of the Transcendental Logic, he states that

> I never arrive at a systematic unity of all appearances of inner sense … reason takes the concept of the empirical unity of all thought; and by thinking this unity as unconditioned and original, reason turns this concept into a rational concept (idea) of a simple substance … in a word, the idea of a simple independent intelligence. In so doing, however, reason has before it nothing but principles of systematic unity that are useful to it in explaining the appearances of the soul. These principles tell us, viz., to regard all determinations as [united] in a single subject; *to regard all powers as much as possible as derived from a single basic power…* (*CPR*, A 682-3/B 710-1. Italic mine.)

The principles of systematic unity allow us to consider all mental powers as derived from a basic idea, i.e., the idea of the soul. Because the idea of the soul includes the idea of the unity of all powers of mind, it implies that theoretical and practical reason are two applications of a single power, instead of two independent powers.[48]

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[47] Ibid, p. 318.

[48] In another passage, Kant claims again that the concept of unity of all mental powers can be applied to theoretical and practical reason. He states that "at first glance, so much heterogeneity that one must at the outset assume almost as many kinds of [powers or] forces of this substance as there are effects

On the other hand, Henrich's analysis of the unity of subjects' cognitive powers is similar to Kleingeld's view on the idea of the basic power. He thinks that the conception of the unity of all mental powers has the status of a subjective principle. He thinks that there is no objective ground for the presupposition of a basic power in the manifold of phenomena. Yet, just like as what Kant says, for the sake of reason itself, there is at least a subjective, but necessary, principle that allows us to consider all faculties of mind to be derived from a single fundamental power. It is the maxim of reason to bring unity into the manifold of cognitions of the understanding. The idea of a basic power is thus a regulative one (*focus imaginarius*). According to Henrich, "[a]s long as the motives for the presupposition of the idea are not understood by critical reflection, it will be impossible to resist the appearance, contained in the very idea of a basic power, that a being corresponding to the idea has to be presupposed."[49] If the unity of reason has the status of a regulative idea, and if it can be subsumed under the regulative idea of the soul, then why Kant claims that the unity of reason cannot be demonstrated in the second *Critique*?[50] Indeed, there are several responses. First, although complete and absolute conformity to the regulative idea of the soul will never be found, one cannot a priori

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coming to the fore. Thus in the human mind the outset [such powers as] sensation, consciousness, imagination … a logical maxim commands us at the outset to diminish as much as possible this seeming diversity by comparing [these powers] and thereby discovering their hidden identity … although logic does not at all ascertain whether there is such a power, the idea of such a *[basic] power* is at least the problem posed for a systematic presentation of the manifoldness of powers. The logical principle of reason demands that we bring about this systematic unity as far as possible … But this unity of reason is among the powers is merely hypothetical. For we are not asserting that such a power must in fact be there. Rather, we are asserting that we must–for reason's benefit, viz., in order to set up certain principles—seek this absolute basic power for the various rules that may be provided to us by experience, and that we must in this way bring systematic unity into cognition whatever this can be done." (*CPR*, A 649-50/B 677-8. Italic mine.) From the logical principle of reason and for the sake of reason's benefit, we should at least assume that the unity of basic powers also applies to theoretical and practical reason. Thus we could reasonably conclude that theoretical and practical reason are different modes of one and the same reason.

[49] Dieter Henrich, "On the Unity of Subjectivity," *The Unity of Reason: Essays on Kant's Philosophy*, ed. with an introduction by Richard L. Velkley, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994, p. 26.

[50] Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant on the Unity of Theoretical and Practical Reason," *The Review of Metaphysics* 52, Dec 1998, p. 319-20.

know to what extent something might turn out to conform to it. In other words, one could not set a restriction a priori to use the idea of soul to solve the problem of the unity of reason, unless one can prove that such an attempt is impossible. Although the unity of reason cannot be ascertained by any empirical means, since reason itself and the idea of the soul are not possible experience, it leaves open any possible interpretations of the problem of the unity of reason. In reality, in his discussion of the idea of the soul and that of a basic power, Kant admits that it is impossible to discover an absolutely basic power, but only a comparatively one. Thus, in the first *Critique*, he claims that

> the more the appearances of one power and another are found to be identical to each other, the more probable does it become that these appearances are nothing but different manifestations of one and the same power—which may be called (*comparatively*) their *basic power* … The comparative basic powers must in turn be compared with one another, so that by discovering their accordance we can bring them close to a single radical—i.e., absolute—basic power. (*CPR*, A 649/B 677)

Kant just requires that when we attempt to discover a fundamental power of all other mental powers, we take it as a regulative idea that we can never attain. Therefore, Kleingeld thinks that Kant has grounds to defend the unity of reason as a regulative principle.[51]

However, even if we successfully defend the unity of reason as a regulative principle, it is still not sufficient to defend the regulative reading of the particular passage where Kant claims that there is a necessary, rather than a contingent linkage between theoretical and practical reason (*CPrR*, 5: 121). Kleingeld gives two more considerations to support her interpretation. First of all, though Kant never explicitly indicates the possibility of

[51] Ibid., p. 320.

reading the unity of reason as a regulative idea, there is no prima facie ground to reject this interpretation.[52] Indeed, there are many regulative principles that Kant does not formulate explicitly. For example, the teleological maxim that "reason seeks to reach a supreme unity by means of a purposive causality on the part of the highest cause of the world, and by acting as if this cause, as supreme intelligence, were the cause of everything according to the wisest intention," (*CPR*, A 688/B 716) are only implicitly formulated as regulative principle in Kant's first *Critique*. Secondly, in the same passage of the second *Critique* quoted above, when Kant discusses the unity of reason, he asserts that our consciousness of the moral laws can show that pure reason by itself can be practical. However, this assertion is not a sort of theoretical knowledge, but only has a subjective practical certainty. "In other words, the very same passage in which Kant claims that theoretical and practical reason are different uses of one and the same reason contains another assertion that looks like a claim to theoretical knowledge but must be interpreted as having a weaker status when read in context."[53] It means that if we read the unity of reason as a regulative principle, rather than a theoretical claim, then we can successfully demonstrate the unity of reason.

d) Unification of Reason

i) Unification of Reason in the First and Second *Critiques*

We should bear in mind that the above discussion can at most show that, within the first

[52] Ibid., p. 321.
[53] Ibid.

two *Critiques*, theoretical and practical reason can be united by the idea of the soul, but it is still not clear *how* theoretical and practical reason are unified. According to Kleingeld, the very notion of unification presupposes an antecedent disunity, which seems to be a strong evidence against Kant's doctrine of the unity of reason.[54] Although Kant always emphasizes the unity of reason, if theoretical and practical reason have very different tasks, the question how their activities can be in harmony is still unanswered. If they are in conflict, it would of course threaten the unity of reason. Indeed, Kant does mention the possibility of conflict,

> if pure speculative reason and pure practical reason were merely adjoined (coordinate), the former would by itself tightly close up its boundary and admit nothing from the latter into its domain, while pure practical reason would nonetheless extend its boundaries over everything and, where its need requires, would seek to encompass pure speculative reason too within them. (*CPrR*, 5: 121)

What Kant seems to say in this passage is that it is *conceptually* possible that reason in its theoretical use, which strives for systematic knowledge of what is, would reject the normative moral claims of reason in its practical use, and thus would reject the postulates that are connected with morality. Then, theoretical reason has nothing to do with claims about what ought to be and pure practical reason would not be constrained by the limits of knowledge.[55] In order to solve the problem about the apparent disunity between the tasks of theoretical and practical reason, the following discussion attempts to argue that the idea of a moral author of the world is the key to showing that there is a harmony between the activities of the two uses of reason. More importantly, we will show that it is practical reason which provides the idea of human moral vocation to resolve the above

[54] Ibid., p. 322.
[55] Ibid.

problem.

In the first and second *Critiques*, Kant repeatedly claims that both theoretical and practical uses of reason assume that nature is ordered and its order is governed by a supreme intelligence. In the "Ideal of Pure Reason" of the first *Critique*, Kant first discusses the assumption of an idea of a supreme intelligence. Then, in "The Canon of Pure Reason," he argues that morality assumes the idea of a supreme intelligence and the harmony between nature and morality. He states that

> no matter how far reason may lead us in transcendental and in natural theology, in neither of them do we find any significant basis for assuming just a single being such that we would have sufficient cause to put this being prior to all natural causes and also to make these causes in all respects dependent on it. By contrast, if we consider from the viewpoint of moral unity, as a necessary law of the world, the cause that alone can give to this law the commensurate effect and hence also its obligating force for us, then what will comprises all these laws within itself must be a single supreme will … This will must be omnipotent … omnisicient … omnipresent … eternal, in order that this harmony of nature and freedom may at no time be lacking. (*CPR*, A 814-5/B 842-3)

Nature and freedom are in harmony from a moral point of view, and the necessity of all laws of this world is *regarded as* given by an idea of supreme will. On the other hand, in the second *Critique*, Kant argues similarly that we have to presuppose a moral author of the world so as to bring about a purposive harmony between nature and morality. In the "Dialectic of Pure Practical Reason," Kant asserts that

> here a *subjective* condition of reason enters, [viz.,] the only manner theoretically possible for reason … of thinking the precise harmony of the kingdom of nature with the kingdom of morals, as condition for the possibility of highest good … a free interest of pure practical reason decides for the assumption of a wise originator

> of the world.[Therefore] the principle which determines our judgment in this is basis—*subjectively* indeed as a need, but simultaneously also as a means of furthering what is *objectively* (practically) necessary—of a maxim of assent for a moral aim, i.e., a *pure practical rational faith.* This faith, therefore, is not commanded; rather, as a voluntary determination of our judgment, conducive to the moral (commanded) aim and also accordant with the theoretical need of reason to assume that existence. (*CPrR*, 5: 145-6)

From the moral point of view, we have to assume *though subjectively, but necessary,* a wise originator of the world which can bring about a purposive harmony between the kingdom of nature and the kingdom of morality. It is a belief not only from the point of view of practical reason, but also a belief in accordance with the need of theoretical reason. From the above two quoted passages in the first and second *Critiques*, it is clear that Kant's claim on the unity of theoretical and practical reason requires the harmony between the two uses of reason. A clear distinction of *the unity of reason* and *the unification of reason* can help us understand the problem we are dealing with.[56] At the beginning of this part, we have tried to explain the new regulative reading of Kant's unity of reason in regard to the idea of the soul. Now we are discussing the problem about the unification of theoretical and practical reason, which is a problem about whether the two different applications of reason can be in harmony with each other.

What we are going to argue for the view that nature is designed intellectually is not a view merely showing that theoretical and practical reason *concur*, but that it *connects* the two uses of reason. Briefing speaking, Kant thinks that it is practical reason that provides grounds for regarding nature as being in harmony with its demand. However, it is necessary to show that practical reason's assumption of the harmony between nature and

[56] Ibid., p. 323.

morality does not conflict with theoretical reason's principles and interest. Thus, we will first clarify theoretical reason's characteristics and its role in order to show that it can be compatible with the assumptions that nature is ordered by a supreme intelligence.

ii) Theoretical Reason: From Empirical Laws to Teleological Order of Nature

The concept of systematicity plays an important role in the first *Critique* when Kant accounts for the function of theoretical reason. There Kant distinguishes between two kinds of systematic unity of nature. The first one is about the formal coherence and hierarchical order of a multitude of empirical laws, which he later characterizes as formal purposiveness in the *Critique of Judgment*. The second one is about the teleological order of nature. Although Kant does not develop the conception of natural teleology explicitly in the first *Critique*, he presents the conception of nature as designed in the Transcendental Dialectic. The following is going to discuss these two kinds of systematicity in turn and to show how Kant moves from the systematic order of empirical laws to the teleological order of nature. One of the functions of theoretical reason is to strive for a systematic unity of empirical cognitions. Reason never refers straightforwardly to an object, but refers only to the understanding, in this sense, Kant calls this function of reason as the empirical use of reason. Reason does not create any empirical concepts, but only organizes them and gives them a unity such that they can have their greatest possible extension (*CPR*, A 643/B 672). The Transcendental Analytic of the first *Critique* shows that all experience conforms to a set of a priori synthetic principles and belongs to a single nature. Thus, Kant claims that

> by nature (in the empirical meaning of the term) we mean the coherence of appearances as regards their existence according to necessary rules, i.e., according to laws. There are, then, certain laws—which are, moreover, a priori—that make a nature possible in the first place. Empirical laws can occur and can be found only by means of experience; and this, moreover, in consequence of those original laws through which experience itself becomes possible in the first place. (*CPR*, A 216/B 263)

Yet, from the above passage, Kant has not yet established the condition of the possibility of transforming an aggregate of empirical cognitions of understanding into a systematic whole. Despite the fact that the synthetic a priori principles of the understanding ensure a general uniformity among objects, the variety of objects leaves open the possibility of an infinite number of laws in which we could not discover any unifying order. Thus, experience formed in accordance with the categories of understanding could be chaotic.[57] Kant himself admits that the understanding cannot be the source of laws of nature, claiming that "[i]t is true that empirical laws, as empirical, cannot in any way derive their origin from pure understanding, any more than the immense manifoldness of appearances can be comprehended adequately from the pure form of sensible intuition." (*CPR*, A 127) For example, the synthetic a priori principle that every event has a cause does not guarantee the possibility of knowing the cause of any event at all, nor does it guarantee a uniformity of nature.[58]

Kant discusses the problem of the systematic whole of empirical cognitions mainly in the Transcendental Dialectic, especially in the Appendix. There theoretical reason plays an important role in forming a system of manifold cognitions of the understanding. Kant claims that theoretical reason is needed to direct the employment of the understanding

[57] Susan Neiman, "Reason in Science," *The Unity of Reason: Rereading Kant*, New/ Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 51.
[58] Ibid.

and it is reason that introduces systematicity into experience. Thus, we can understand why Kant says that "without reason [there] would have no coherent use of the understanding, and in the absence of such use would have no sufficient mark of empirical truth. And hence, in view of this mark, we must throughout *presuppose* the systematic unity of nature as objectively valid and necessary." (*CPR*, A 651/B 679. Italic mine.) Moreover, Kant argues that our search for a systematic unity of the understanding's cognitions presupposes that nature allows such unity. It means that Kant thinks that nature is systematizable *for our cognitive power*.

> [Even] where many, although to a certain degree homogeneous substances are found, as in matter in general, reason presupposes systematic unity of manifold [powers or] forces—where the particular natural laws fall under more general ones, and parsimony of principles is not merely an economical principle of reason but becomes an intrinsic law of nature … It is, indeed, impossible to see how there could be a *logical* principle concerning the unity of reason of nature's rules, if we did not presuppose a *transcendental* principle whereby such systematic, construed as attaching to the objects themselves, is assumed a priori as necessary … if reason were free to admit as likewise possible that all forces are [actually] heterogeneous and that systematic unity of their derivation does not conform to nature? ... reason would then proceed in a manner contrary to its vocation. (*CPR*, A 651/B 679)

Kant thinks that reason's search for the systematic unity of knowledge allows us to discover and to organize empirical laws. It is reason's need to search for the hidden unity behind the manifoldness of particular natural laws. Also, it presupposes that nature itself has an "actual" arrangement so that we can organize things in nature in terms of genera and species, and the principles of homogeneity, specification and continuity.

> Consider the principle that all the manifoldness among individual things does not exclude the identity of a *species*; that the various species must be treated only as the different determinations of a few *genera*, but these genera as the different

> determinations of still higher *families*, etc.; and that we must therefore seek a certain systematic unity of all possible empirical concepts insofar as they can be derived from higher and more general ones. (*CPR*, A 651/B 679)

To sum up, theoretical reason's quest for systematicity presupposes that our nature is organized and the systematic unity is inherent in the objects in nature. The principles that allow us to regard nature as organized are not constitutive, but regulative ones. They are subjective principles that are obtained not from the character of the object, but from reason's interest concerning a certain possible perfection of the cognition of this object. These regulative principles just act as a guide or a heuristic principle to help *organize* the cognitions presented to reason by the understanding. Thus, the assumption that nature can be systematized by us is not a piece of knowledge about the world, but a *perspective* that we *naturally* take up to guide our investigations.[59]

On the other hand, from other passages of the first *Critique*, Kant seems to argue that taking nature as a systematic unity means regarding it as possessing a rational order. Kant thinks that we could regard nature *as if* its order were created by a supreme reason. He asserts that

> by analogy with the realities in the world … I shall think a being that possess all of this in perfection. And inasmuch as this idea rests merely on my reason, I shall be able to think this being as an *independent reason* that is the cause of the world whole through its ideas of the greatest harmony and unity … I do by regarding all linkages *as if* they were arrangements made by a supreme reason of which our reason is a faint copy. (*CPR*, A 678/B 706)

Although we can conceive all the ordered things *as if* they were created by a wise

[59] Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant on the Unity of Theoretical and Practical Reason," *The Review of Metaphysics* 52, Dec 1998, p. 326.

originator, it does not prove that such an originator really exists. It just acts as an idea to guide our investigation of nature. Kant says that "the concept of a supreme intelligence is a mere idea. I.e., its objective reality is not held to consist in the concept's referring straightforwardly to an object (for we could not justify he concept's objective reality if we look it in that signification.)" (*CPR*, A 670/B 698). It is worth noting that there are similarities between the concept of systematicity in the first *Critique* and the concept of formal purposiveness in the third *Critique*, and between the claim that we can investigate nature in terms of genera and species in the first *Critique* and the concept of reflective judgment in the third *Critique*. In the third *Critique*, Kant explains that

> reflective judgment, which is obliged to ascend from the particular in nature to the universal, requires a principle, which it cannot borrow from experience, precisely because it is to be the basis of the unity of all empirical principles under higher though still empirical principles, and hence is to be the basis that makes it possible to subordinate empirical principles to one another in a *systematic* way … the particular laws must … be viewed in terms of such a unity as [they would have] if they too had been given by an understanding (even though not ours) so as to assist our cognitive powers by making *a system of experience* in terms of particular laws…the form that things of nature have in terms of empirical laws in general is the *[formal] purposiveness of nature* in its diversity. In other words, through this concept we present nature *as if* an understanding contained the basis of the unity of what is diverse in nature's empirical laws. (*CJ*, 5: 180-1)

If we take the idea of the highest intelligence seriously, we are able to justify a teleological view of nature in the first *Critique*, since this can make the systematic unity of things possible. More precisely, the teleological principle states that everything in the nature serves good purposes, just like as every part in an animal fulfills its functions. However, just like the idea of the highest intelligence, the teleological principle cannot be taken as a constitutive principle, but only as a regulative principle of reason for

reaching supreme systematic unity. Thus, Kant claims that

> this supreme formal unity, which rests solely on concepts of reason, is the *purposive* unity of things, and reason's *speculative* interest … such a principle opens up to our reason, as applied to the realm of experience, entirely new prospects for connecting the things of the world according to *teleological laws*, and for arriving thereby at their *greatest systematic unity*. (*CPR*, A 686-7/B 714-5. Italic mine.)

Yet, Kleingeld still criticizes that, in the first *Critique*, Kant does not fully develop his argument for (natural) teleology. First, she complains that there seems a great distance between teleology and the "greatest systematic unity." Kant should at least explain why teleology leads to the "greatest systematic unity," or why regarding nature as a mechanistic system does not suffice. Moreover, she thinks that the introduction of the notion of final cause into different branches of sciences gives rise to the question of the interrelation between final causes.

> It would seem to follow from the logic of Kant's argument concerning reason's quest for systematicity that the teleological maxim that everything in nature serves some good purpose motivates a search for a single end towards which all of nature is oriented. If reason strives for systematicity, it cannot rest content with viewing nature as containing a mere *aggregate of teleological relations*.[60]

Indeed, Kant deals with the problem of teleology in the section 82-4 of the *Critique of Judgment*. The difference between the first *Critique* and third *Critique* on the problem of teleology is worth noting. It is about different approaches for the justification of teleological judgment. In the first *Critique*, Kant justifies the teleological view of nature by appealing to reason's interest in systematic unity. By contrast, in the third *Critique*, he

[60] Ibid., p. 327.

first justifies the use of teleological judgment in the cases of organisms before he broadens the scope of teleological judgment to the whole nature.[61] There Kant argue that if we assume reflectively, rather than determinately, that there is teleology in nature, we have to ask for an *ultimate purpose of nature* in order to comprehend nature as a system, and a *final purpose of creation* in order to provide a complete grounding for the teleological order.

Kant argues that the ultimate purpose of nature is to further the development of the end-setting capacities of mankind. He claims that

> once we adopt the principle that there is an objective purposiveness in the diverse species of creatures on earth and in their extrinsic relation[s] to one another as purposively structured beings, it is reasonable to think of the[se] relation[s] as having a certain organization in turn, and as [forming] a system, of all the natural kingdoms, in terms of final causes. And yet it seems that experience flatly contradicts such a maxim of reason, especially [the implication] that there is an ultimate purpose of nature. An ultimate purpose of nature is certainly required for such a system to be possible. (*CJ*, 5: 427)

According to Kant, nature's ultimate purpose is a subjective and formal condition for fostering man's aptitude in purpose setting, and for using nature as a means for achieving their purposes. The ultimate purpose that produces in a rational being an aptitude for purposes is culture. Kant thinks that, in the chain of natural purposes, mankind is never more than a link. It seems that there are many purposes that are determined by his natural predisposition, but man is at the same time a means for preserving the purposiveness in the mechanism of other links in nature. Human beings are in reality the only beings that have understanding and an ability to set himself purposes of his own choice. If we regard

[61] Ibid., p. 328.

nature as a teleological system, then it is man's vocation to give nature and themselves purposes. Kant uses the term "culture" as synonymous with the development of the rational predispositions of humankind. Culture is the gradual development of the aptitude of man to set ends for himself, and to be receptive to highest purposes.[62]

However, since man is one of the members in the chains of natural purposes and they might act merely as means for natural mechanism, human beings as members of the world of sense cannot be the final purpose of creation. Kant believes that human beings as moral beings are the final purpose of the existence of the world, i.e., of creation itself. Human beings as rational beings are the only beings that pursue purposes that are unconditioned and independent of any conditions in nature. Thus, Kant suggests that

> Now if things in the world, which are dependent beings with regard to their existence, require a supreme cause that acts in terms of purposes, then man is the final purpose of creation. For without man the chain of mutually subordinated purposes would not have a complete basis. Only in man and even in him only as moral subjects, do we find unconditioned legislation regarding purposes. It is this legislation, therefore, which alone enables man to be a final purpose to which all of nature is teleologically subordinated. (*CJ*, 5: 436)

According to G. J. Warnock, human rational nature is the capacity in human beings which makes them capable of moral actions and making moral judgments.[63] Kant claims that human's rational nature exists as an end in itself and has absolute worth. Thus, rational nature of human beings is the source of the moral laws. "Being rational is the condition, both necessary and sufficient, of being a self-legislating member of the

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[62] Ibid.

[63] G. J. Warnock, "The Primacy of Practical Reason," T*he Proceedings of the British Academy*, vol. II, London: Oxford University Press, 1966, p. 255.

'Kingdom of Ends,' bound, equally with all others, by laws of one's own making."[64]

After explaining the concepts of ultimate and final purposes, we can now understand how teleology leads to the idea of the greatest systematic unity. The ultimate purpose of nature allows us to regard many aggregates as purposively structured. In other words, it allows us to present nature as a purposively ordered whole. The final purpose of creation allows us to regard the world as being created intentionally. We also note that theoretical reason borrows the idea of humanity's moral vocation from practical reason to provide an ordering principle for a teleological conception of nature as a whole. After showing the function of theoretical reason, we can at least assert that theoretical reason is compatible with the claim that nature is designed and the claim that practical reason provides grounds for regarding nature as being in harmony with its demands; however, the above account does not yet fully explain the unification of theoretical and practical reason. The following is going to address the problem of unification of reason directly by Kant's account of practical reason.

iii) The Ideas of a Moral World and a Wise Creator

Based on some passages in the first *Critique*, I will argue that the concept of a moral world or a realm of ends and the idea that nature is intentionally designed by a supreme intelligence are the key to explaining the harmony between nature and morality. In the first *Critique*, Kant has already been aware that because the a priori laws of nature and of morality are extremely different and independent of each other, there seems to be no

[64] Ibid.

guarantee that moral agents can make any influences on nature. Kant admits that "although reason has causality with regard to freedom as such, it does not have causality with regard to all of nature; and although moral principles of reason can give rise to free actions, they cannot give rise to natural laws" (*CPR*, A 807-8/B 835-6). Yet, in the Doctrine of Method of the first *Critique*, Kant argues that the idea of a moral world, which is demanded by pure practical reason, is possible only if nature is designed to be in harmony with morality and is regarded as being created by a supreme reason. Thus, Kant claims that

> only in the ideal of the highest *original* good can pure reason find the basis of the practically necessary connection between the two elements of the highest derivative good, viz., the basis of an intelligible, i.e., *moral* world. Now, we must through reason necessarily conceive ourselves as belonging to such a world, although the senses exhibit to us nothing but a world of appearances. Hence we shall have to assume the moral world as being a consequence of our conduct in the world of sense. (*CPR*, A 811/B 839)

Moreover, our pure practical laws will justify our belief that nature is designed by a supreme will. Kant claims that

> from the viewpoint of moral unity, as necessary law of the world, the cause that alone can give to this law the commensurate effect and hence also its obligating force for us, then what comprises all these laws within itself must be a single supreme will … it was precisely these laws whose intrinsic practical necessity led us to the presupposition of an independent cause, or of a wise ruler of the world, in order to provide these laws with effect. (*CPR*, A 815-8/B 843-6)

Human beings as moral subjects impose universal moral laws, and our own moral maxims are compatible with that of the others in a way that a moral unity or a moral

world can be constructed. A moral order presupposes that everything in nature has its own purposes. As a result, we have to assume that the world is purposively constructed by a supreme intelligence, though it is just an idea. Given that the idea of the order of nature as the product of an intelligent design is also an idea endorsed by theoretical reason, the idea of practical reason about the world as it can be in harmony with the idea of theoretical reason about the world as it is.[65] Therefore, the two uses of reason can be united by the conception of nature as designed by a supreme intelligence. In the first *Critique*, Kant does not explicitly discuss the notion of natural teleology, but he does present a teleological view of nature implicitly. From this, we might go further to regard the teleological view of nature as promoting the moral development of mankind so that there is a linkage between theoretical and practical reason.

Just like theoretical reason, pure practical reason strives for systematic unity. The categorical imperative commands us to act in accordance with moral maxims that can be universalized. All moral maxims are organized under one general principle though it is just an idea or what we call regulative principle.[66] Furthermore, if all individual agents can always act perfectly morally, then the result is that practical reason can construct a moral world. According to Kant, "the moral world is thought merely as an intelligible world, inasmuch as we abstract in from all conditions (purposes) and even from all obstacles for morality (weakness or impurity of human nature)" (*CPR*, A 808/B 836). The members of the moral world regard each other as ends, and because they all act in accordance with the moral laws, their moral ends form a systematic unity. In such a world, their free power of choice is in systematic unity with each other (*CPR*, A 808/B

[65] Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant on the Unity of Theoretical and Practical Reason," *The Review of Metaphysics* 52, Dec 1998, p. 330.
[66] Onora O'Neill, *Constructions of Reason: Explorations of Kant's Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989, p. 81-104.

836).[67] Although the moral world is just an idea, it is a necessarily practical idea. This idea is constructed by abstracting from all shortcomings of human beings and everything empirical in nature. Kant does admit that this idea cannot be fully actualized in the world of sense, "yet it is a practical idea that actually can and ought to have its influence on the world of sense, in order to bring this world as much as possible into accordance with the moral world" (*CPR*, A 808/B 836) through our moral actions. Indeed Kant thinks that we can do so only if we regard nature as a purposive system, as he suggests in the first *Critique*, we can arrive at

> systematic unity of purposes in this world of intelligences—a world that as mere nature can indeed be called only the world of sense, but that as a system of freedom can be called the intelligible, i.e., the moral world (*regnum gratiae*). But this systematic of purposes leads inevitably also to the purposive unity of all things making up this large world [as a unity] according to universal natural laws. (*CPR*, A 815/B 843)

Even though the laws of nature and that of morality are so different from each other, Kant thinks that they can be regarded as being in harmony only if the harmony is thought to be brought about by a wise originator. So, he continues to say that "[t]he world must be presented by us as having arisen from an idea, if it is to harmonize with … the moral use [of reason] which rests entirely on the idea of the highest good." (*CPR*, A 815/B 843) Hence theoretical and practical reason are united, and that all the investigation of nature can be directed towards a system of purposes (*CPR*, A 815-6/B 843-4). Therefore, the conception of nature as purposive and as designed by a supreme intelligence is the key to

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[67] Indeed, the concept of moral world is introduced much earlier in the *Groundwork*, where Kant characterizes the moral world as the kingdom of ends. There Kant claims that "[t]he concept of every rational being as one who must regard himself as giving universal law through all the maxims of his will … leads to a very fruitful concept dependent upon it, namely that *of a kingdom of ends*. By a *kingdom* I understand a systematic union of various rational beings through common laws." *GMM*, 4: 433.

uniting the two uses of reason. However, Kleingeld reminds us that Kant does not specify what it means to say that the investigation of nature tends towards a system of purposes. In the first *Critique* it still remains unclear whether Kant thinks that the harmony between nature and morality requires a teleological order, or merely a systematic unity of mechanical causal laws.[68] Even in the second *Critique*, Kant also does not address the problem directly. According to Kleingeld,

> Kant states that we have a *choice* as to how we think of the harmony between natural laws and the laws of morality and that reason naturally opts in favor of the assumption that a moral author of the world has established an exact harmony between the realm of nature and the realm of morality. Yet Kant fails to indicate whether this harmony has to be conceived of as involving natural teleology.[69]

In fact, in the *Critique of Judgment*, Kant introduces a moral argument for the existence of God to explain the harmony between the laws of nature and freedom. He states explicitly that there could be such a harmony without natural teleology. He believes that the moral proof for the existence of God does not depend on the existence of empirical material for teleology, stating that

> [T]he moral proof (which admittedly proves the existence of God from a point of view of reason that is only practical, though also indispensable) would still retain its force if the world offered us no materials at all, or only ambiguous material, for physical teleology … And yet reason … would still find in the concept of freedom, and in the moral ideas based on it, a practically sufficient basis for postulating the concept of the original being as adequate to these ideas, i.e., as a deity, and for postulating nature (even our own existence) as a final purpose that conforms to [the concept] and the laws of freedom. (*CJ*, 5: 478-9)

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[68] Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant on the Unity of Theoretical and Practical Reason," *The Review of Metaphysics* 52, Dec 1998, p. 332.
[69] Ibid. Italic mine.

Indeed, the fact that the harmony between nature and morality does not require natural teleology does not mean that there is no natural teleology. According to Kant, the fact that the actual world provides the rational beings with enough material for physical teleology presents a welcome confirmation of the harmony of nature and morality (*CJ*, 5: 479). If the physicoteleological basis were sufficient for the desired proof of the existence of a moral author of the world, speculative reason would be satisfied; however, this proof by itself does not point to morality at all. Kant suggests that "the physicoteleological basis for proving [the existence of God] is insufficient for theology is due to the fact that it does not, and cannot, provide a sufficiently determinate concept of the original being" (*CJ*, 5: 480). Therefore, the physicoteleological proof fails to prove the existence of a supreme intelligence, but this weakness is not sufficient to prove that there is no natural teleology. In reality, earlier in the "Critique of Teleological Judgment," Kant has already argued that it is justified to assume a teleological order of nature. The possibility of understanding organisms as a system of ends provides a justification for introducing teleological concepts into nature. According to Kant, if parts of nature can be judged teleologically, we are justified to broaden the scope of the teleological principle to the whole nature. Hence, he claims that

> as far as matter is organized does it necessarily carry with it the concept of it as a natural purpose, because the specific [purposive] form it has is at the same time a product of nature. But this concept of a natural purpose leads us necessarily to the idea of all *nature as a system* in terms of the *rule of purposes*, and we must subordinate all mechanism of nature to this idea according to principles of reason … it is regulative and not constitutive. It only serves *as a guide* that allows us to consider natural things in terms of a new law-governed order by referring them to an already given basis [a purpose] as that which determines them. Thus we *expand* natural science [*Naturkunde*] in terms of a different principle, that of final causes, yet without detracting from the principle of mechanism in the causality of nature. (*CJ*, 5: 378-9. Italic mine.)

iv) Primacy of the Practical Reconsidered

After analyzing the function and the characteristic of theoretical and practical reason, we can draw some conclusions about the unification of reason. First, this unification is achieved by the assumption of practical reason that nature is purposively organized by a wise creator. Then it is possible for us to regard human beings as moral agents, which are able to influence the world of sense through their actions. Secondly, practical reason allows us to regard the world as designed by a supreme intelligence independent of natural teleology.

After showing the unity and unification of reason, we will now explain in what sense practical reason has primacy over theoretical reason. There are two aspects from which the primacy of the practical can be shown. Firstly, the belief in the harmony between morality and nature as well as the belief in the existence of God can only be justified unconditionally from the moral point of view. It is because these beliefs are directly connected with our moral consciousness. On the contrary, theoretical reason can merely justify the *regulative* use of the ideas of God and the systematicity of nature to guide our investigation into nature and its order. It is because the use of these ideas are only conditionally justified. Kant claims that

> one can regard the need of reason as twofold: *first* in its *theoretical*, second in its *practical* use. The first need I have just mentioned; but one sees very well that it is only conditioned, i.e., we must assume the existence of God *if we want to judge* about the first causes of everything contingent, chiefly in the order of ends which is actually present in the world. Far more important is the need of reason in its

> practical reason in its practical use, because it is unconditioned, and we are necessitated to presuppose the existence of God not only if we *want* to judge, but because we *have to judge*. (*OT*, 8: 139)

The second point about the primacy of the practical is that practical reason makes a much stronger assumption than theoretical reason. Practical reason postulates the existence of God and the purposive order of nature, whereas theoretical reason cannot prove or disprove the existence of God. But Kant insists that if practical reason is justified to postulate the existence of God, theoretical reason cannot reject it. According to Allison, "our practical interest (in morality and the conditions of its possibility) is entitled to override our speculative interest in avoiding ungrounded claims and the latter must therefore submit to the former."[70] And theoretical reason can only justify the use of the idea of nature as a system ordered by a wise creator. Therefore, primacy of the practical means that theoretical reason must accept the postulates of practical reason though the proof of their objectivity transcends the capacities of theoretical reason.[71]

[70] Henry E. Allison, *Idealism and Freedom: Essays on Kant's Theoretical and Practical Philosophy*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996, p. 19.
[71] Pauline Kleingeld, "Kant on the Unity of Theoretical and Practical Reason," *The Review of Metaphysics* 52, Dec 1998, p. 335.

III. The Superiority of the Practical on Moral Theology

We will now analyze the problem of primacy in the context of rational faith. When reflecting upon the conditions of human morality, Kant's concern is to reconcile practical reason's metaphysical postulates with the cognitive limitations of speculative reason. Practical reason's primacy over the theoretical one lies in the fact that it is justified to postulate the reality of freedom, immortality and God as conditions for the possibility of morality, although theoretical reason can neither prove or disprove the reality of those objects. In this part, we will further discuss the nature of the postulate of God and the moral proof of it. The moral proof of the existence of God in the second *Critique* assumes two ends that Kant thinks every finite, rational agent must pursue, i.e., happiness and virtue, which are linked in the concept of the highest good. We will not deal with the postulate of freedom in detail, but focus on the primacy of practical reason in Kant's moral theology.[72] Briefly speaking, the moral argument for the existence of God assumes that the goal of pursuing the highest good would be impossible unless God exists.

a) The Moral Proof for the Existence of God

[72] Indeed, Kant does present a moral argument for the idea of freedom, but the nature of this argument is different from that for the postulate of God. The "fact of pure reason" is not about freedom but rather our awareness of moral laws. Kant does sometimes say that freedom and the moral law are "identical," and this seems to be the reason why he places freedom in the category of *res facti* in the third *Critique*. Freedom is then the condition must be presupposed if moral volition in general is possible. For a detail discussion about the moral argument for freedom, see Allen W. Wood, "Kant's Moral Argument," *Kant's Moral Religion*, Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 1970, p. 10-37.

Moral theology infers the properties and the existence of an originator of the world from the character, order, and unity found in this world—a world in which we must assume two kinds of causality and their rules, viz., nature and freedom. Therefore, the theology that ascends from this world to the supreme intelligence is called moral theology (*CP*R, A 632/B 660). Kant deliberately draws the distinction between moral theology and theological morality. The latter contains moral laws that *presuppose* the existence of a supreme ruler of the world, whereas the former is a conviction of the existence of a supreme being that is based on moral laws.

The moral argument for the existence of God is contained in the Section V of Chapter Two of the Dialectic of the second *Critique*. It is placed therein together with a parallel argument for the postulate of the immortality of the soul. The two postulates are placed in the context of the dialectic because they are the means of solving an antinomy in practical reason. Practical reason seeks the highest good, but then it faces an apparent contradiction when conceiving how the highest good is possible. The concept of the highest good, which is introduced at the beginning of chapter two, consists of two components: (1) complete virtue, which constitutes worthiness to be happy, and (2) happiness proportional to virtue. Both elements are necessary ends for practical reason because they represent two applications of reason in the pursuit of its ends. Finite rational agents pursue happiness but they also pursue moral ends and the complete harmony between their actions and the moral laws, virtue. Pure reason, in its speculative or in its practical use, always "demands the absolute totality of conditions for a given conditioned" (*CPrR*, 5: 107). Kant claims that "the furtherance of the highest good …is an a priori necessary object of our will and is inseparably linked with the moral law" (*CPrR*, 5: 114). For Kant, the attainment of this combined good is possible. Without the

hope of achieving the highest good, practical reason would be caught in an antinomy (the thesis of the antinomy is represented by the desire for happiness, whereas the antithesis by the demands of virtue) and the moral laws would thereby generate a practical absurdity.

The antinomy of practical reason consists in the contradiction between the endeavor to be virtuous and the rational pursuit of happiness. The two components of the highest good seem to be incompatible. In the dialectic, Kant criticizes classical moralists who link virtue and happiness together.[73] The Stoics believe that virtuous action will automatically produce happy. The Epicureans are also criticized because they take the maxims of virtue to be the only rational route to happiness. In Kant's opinion, virtue and

[73] The distinction of an ethics of principles and an ethics of ideals can help understand the difference between Kant's own ethical theory and all ancient ethical theory. An ethics of principles is one grounded on maxims, laws, or other normative principles to which we should try to make our actions conform. An ethics of ideals is one grounded on a conception of a certain kind of person, whom we should strive to be like. In the second *Critique*, Kant introduces four different ethical ideals in antiquity, the first three focusing on our natural powers, and the last two involving our relation to the supernatural. I. The Cynic ideal (of Diogenes and Antisthenes), which is natural simplicity, and happiness as the product of nature rather than of art. II. The Epicurean ideal, which is that of the man of the world, and happiness as a product of art, not of nature. III. The Stoic ideal (of Zeno), which is that of the sage, and happiness as identical with moral perfection or virtue. IV. The Christian ideal of holiness, whose pattern is Jesus Christ. (*CPrR*, 5: 127n) Kant regards the Christian ideal as the latest and highest of the ancient ideals. Kant's endorsement of the Christian ideal presents his view about the relation of ideals to principles because he calls it "the personified idea of the good principle" (*Rel.*, 6: 60). An ideal is the concept of an individual being that corresponds to an a priori concept of reason, or an idea. But an idea, in turn, rests on a principle of reason. Ideals have their place, but they are grounded on ideas, which in turn are grounded on principles. Kant argues for this ordering in theoretical as well as practical philosophy (*CPR*, A298-332/ B355-390, *CPrR*, 5: 57-63). To realize this ordering is the basic advance of modern ethics over ancient ethics. For Kant, the Christian ideal, the latest and the most perfect of the ancient ideals, was pivotal, because it conveyed the truth that all ideals based on human examples are imperfect, and no human being can hope to reach the pure ideal except through supernatural divine aid. This led morality beyond an ethical of ideals and toward an ethics of principles. In the second *Critique*, Kant admits the status of Christianity. He claims that "the doctrine of Christianity, even when not yet regarded as religious doctrine, provides on this point a concept of the highest good (the kingdom of God) which alone is adequate to the strictest demand of practical reason. the moral law is holy (unforbearing) and demands holiness of morals, although any moral perfection that a human being can reach is always only virtue … therefore, with regard to the holiness that the Christian law demands, the moral law leaves the creature with nothing but progress *ad infinitum*, but precisely therefore also entitles the creature to hope for this continuance [as] proceeding *ad infinitum*" (*CPrR*, 5: 127n). Yet, Christianity is still an ethics of ideal, which asserts objectively that there is a God in the future life, whereas Kantian ethics regards the idea of God as a postulate. The nature of the postulate of God will be clearly discussed in the third part of this paper.

happiness cannot be made compatible by supposing that the desire for happiness is the motive to virtuous actions because this would destroy the value of virtuous actions. The motive to virtuous actions must be respect for the moral laws alone. At the same time, finite rational agents cannot suppose that acting out of respect for the moral law can reliably produce happy. It is because the order of events in the world of sense is not dependent on our moral will. Rather, it is dependent upon natural causes.

> Any practical connection of causes and effects in the world, as a result of the determination of the will, conforms not to moral attitudes of the will but to acquaintance with the laws of nature and to the physical ability to use them for one's aims, and because consequently no necessary connection, sufficient for the highest good, of happiness with virtue in the world can be expected to come about through the most meticulous observance of moral laws. (*CPrR*, 5: 113-4)

This passage introduces a crucial point. Kant views the moral agent as acting in accordance with rational and necessary moral laws. However, the world in which these actions take place, the spatio-temporal world of physical objects, is not, as it appears to us, a moral world. Moral laws should govern our actions but they do not appear to govern the world in which our moral actions take place.[74] The moral theology Kant seeks to secure through the postulate of the existence of God is meant to assure that there is a moral world behind the world of sense. Something beyond the desire for happiness and the respect for the moral law must be presupposed to secure the interconnection between virtue and happiness, and this is God. In the Chapter Two of the Dialectic of the second *Critique*, Kant formulates the moral proof of the existence of God. He first restates that the antinomy of practical reason:

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[74] Peter Byrne, "The Positive Case for God," *Kant on God*, British: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007, p. 85.

> *Happiness* is the state of a rational being in the world for whom in the whole of his existence *everything proceeds according to his wish and will*; it therefore rests on the harmony of nature with his whole purpose as well as with the essential determining basis of his will. Now, the moral law as a law of freedom commands through determining bases that are to be wholly independent of nature and of its harmony with our power of desire (as incentives). (*CPrR*, 5: 124)

Since finite rational beings are not the cause of nature, they cannot by their own power make the world of sense in harmony thoroughly with their practical laws. Thus, there is in the moral law "not the slightest basis for a necessary connection between morality and the happiness, proportionate thereto, of a being belonging to the world as a part thereof and thus dependent upon it" (*CPrR*, 5: 124). Kant then claims that our obligation to pursue the highest good fails if it is not possible to attain it, saying, "[n]onetheless, in the practical problem of pure reason, i.e., [that of] working necessarily for the highest good, such a connection is postulated as necessary: we *ought* to seek to further the highest good (hence this good must, after all, be possible)." (*CPrR*, 5: 125) If "ought" implies "can" and we ought to pursue the highest good, then we must postulate a moral agency of a non-human kind to ensure the coincidence of virtue and happiness. "Therefore the existence of a cause of nature as a whole, distinct from nature, which contains the basis of this connection, namely the basis of the exact harmony of [one's] happiness with [one's] morality, is also *postulated*." (*CPrR*, 5: 125) More precisely, this kind of causality will ensure a correspondence not merely between happiness and our moral conduct outwardly considered, but also a harmony between happiness and our inward moral disposition. Therefore, Kant suggests that the highest good in the world is possible only if a supreme cause of nature is assumed, which has a causality corresponding to moral disposition. If the supreme cause of the world is conceived to coordinate our inward disposition with the flow of external events, it must have intelligence and

understanding because it must be capable of representing the moral laws to itself. It must combine intelligence and understanding with the necessary powers of will. Thus it must be God as traditionally conceived. The moral argument in the second *Critique* concludes that it is morally necessary to assume the existence of God.[75] Or more precisely, finite moral agents have to assume the existence of a highest original good that is an intelligent, omnipotent being with a holy moral will (*CPrR*, 5: 125).

Put it simply, the moral argument for the existence of God can indeed be summarized in the following steps: (1) It is rationally and morally necessary to attain the highest good, that is happiness proportional to virtue. (2) Since we are obliged to attain the highest good, it must be possible for us to attain. (3) Attaining the highest good is only possible if natural order of causality is part of an overarching moral order. (4) The harmony between moral order and natural causality is only possible if we postulate the existence of God.[76] However, there are some hidden problems in Kant's moral proof of the existence of God. It remains unclear what kind of epistemic status the postulate of God has. Does it mean that God really exists? The following two sections will discuss the

[75] In fact, Kant has discussed a model of morality without God in the third *Critique*. He imagines what would happen to a righteous man like Spinoza who does his moral duty but has no belief in a law-like connection between the performance of duty and what happens to himself and others. This individual is said to seek unselfishly the good to which the moral law directs his powers. He gets some assistance here and there from external events. But he faces a world that appears to be wholly indifferent to the moral demands driving his conduct: "Deceit, violence, and envy will always be rife to him, even though he himself is honest, peaceable, and benevolent. Moreover, as concerns the other righteous people he meets: no matter how worthy of happiness they may be, nature, which pays no attention to that, will still subject them to all the evils of deprivation, disease, and untimely death, just like all the other animals on the earth. And they will stay subjected to these evils always, until one vast tomb engulfs them one and all (honest or not, that makes no difference here) and hurls them, who managed to believe they were the final purpose of creation, back into the abyss of the purposeless chaos of matter from which they were taken." (*CJ*, 5: 452) Kant thinks that individual moral acts are possible for this atheist, but in the long term only disabling moral despair awaits. Similar discussion appears in the first *Critique*, where Kant states that "without a God and a world not now not visible to us but hoped for, the glorious ideas of morality are, indeed, objects of approval and admiration but not incentives for resolution and practices" (*CPR*, A813/ B841).

[76] For the four steps, see Peter Byrne, "The Positive Case for God," *Kant on God*, British: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007, p. 86.

problem in detail.

b) The Distinction of Knowledge and Faith

Kant's moral proof of the existence of God is indeed not *really* a proof. It does not lead to the conclusion that God really exists, but only to the conclusion that I am certain that there is a God. In the third *Critique*, the moral proof is specially characterized as a subjective argument, instead of an objective one:

> This moral argument is not meant to provide an *objectively* valid proof of the existence of God. It is not meant to prove to the skeptic that there is a God, but that he *must adopt* the assumption of this proposition as one of the maxims of his practical reason if he wants to think consistently in morality. Nor is the argument meant to say that it is necessary *for morality* that we assume that the happiness of all rational beings in the world is [to be] proportionate to their morality but rather that *morality makes* it necessary for us to make this assumption. Hence this argument is sufficient *subjectively*, for moral beings. (*CJ*, 5: 450ff)

The moral proof is not an argument from a fact about the world to God. Rather, the argument attempts to show for each of us as rational moral agents, we must adopt an 'assumption' to make our pursuit of the highest good rational. The subjective character of the argument is expressed in the second *Critique* when Kant discusses the existence of God as one of the postulates of pure practical reason. Kant claims that the moral necessity of the existence of God is a subjective need, rather than an objective duty. We have no duty whatever to assume the existence of a thing because the assumption would be a theoretical use of reason. Kant does not mean that "it is necessary to assume the existence of God *as a basis of all obligation as such*" (*CPrR*, 5: 125). The only duty we

have in connection with the moral proof is the attempt to attain the highest good in the world.

The above thought is further developed in the Eighth Section of Chapter Two of the Dialectic. We are told that it is not possible to conceive how virtue and happiness can be interconnected in the highest good by means of natural causality. Kant claims that it is

> *merely subjective*, i.e., our reason finds it *impossible for it* to make comprehensible to itself, according to a mere course of nature, a connection so precisely commensurate and thoroughly purposive between two events of the world that occur according to such different laws, even though—as with everything else in nature that is purposive—it yet also cannot prove, i.e., establish sufficiently from objective bases, that this connection is impossible according to universal laws of nature. (*CPrR*, 5: 145)

The moral argument operates in the spirit of an orientation in human thinking. Human beings as moral agents seek the highest good and have to orient themselves in the right direction for this task. The theme of orientation is discussed in Kant's essay *What Does it Mean to Orient Oneself in Thinking?* Belief in the existence of God is for Kant a result of human reason's subjective need to orient itself. That is a universal need but it is still a need and not a fact about reality independent of us.[77] The essay has a simple answer to the question of why reason needs to postulate the existence of God: reason needs to orient itself. Kant thinks that objective orientation is dependent upon subjective orientation. This thought about the subjective basis of orientation extends to orientation in human thinking, especially in the case where reason seeks direction in thought about the transcendent:

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[77] Peter Byrne, "The Positive Case for God," *Kant on God*, British: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007, p. 77.

> it is no longer in a position to bring its judgments under a determinate maxim according to objective grounds of cognition, but solely to bring its judgments under a determinate maxim according to a subjective ground of differentiation in the determination of its own faculty of judgment … But now there enters *the right* of reason's *need*, as a subjective ground for presupposing and assuming something which reason may not presume to know through objective grounds; and consequently for orienting itself in thinking, solely through reason's own need, in that immeasurable space of the supersensible, which for us is filled with dark night. (*OT*, 8: 136)

In the moral proof, orientation involves the belief that there is an intelligent, creator God. This belief can provide orientation in pursuit of the highest good. According to Byrne, "[w]e have not discovered that nature on its own is not the source of the purposiveness in reality that practical reason requires. We have not discovered that only a God could provide this purposiveness."[78] The belief in God is a *faith* that is motivated by reason in its end-seeking guise. Kant does not mean to determine what an objectively existing God must be really like, although he describes God as omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent, eternal and so forth. Rather, he just points out that the postulate of the existence of God with these attributes is necessary for the self-orientation of reason.

By distinguishing between opinion, faith and knowledge, the structure and the function of the practical postulates can be clarified. The key question is simply whether the moral proof of the existence of God is a knowledge claim or not. First, it is worth mentioning that Kant is entirely clear that theoretical reason cannot be indifferent to practical reason, it cannot turn a blind eye to the postulates. If the propositions in question were imperatives, then no conflict would arise because imperatives have no truth value. The

[78] Peter Byrne, "The Positive Case for God," *Kant on God*, British: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007, p. 87.

postulates are, however, assertoric. As Kant states in *the Jäsche Logic*, the postulates are, according to his definition, both practical and theoretical in nature: they are practical because even though they are not themselves imperatives, they contain the grounds for possible imperatives, but they are also theoretical because their object not an acting but rather a being (*JL*, 9: 86-7). Gardner reminds us that even though the function that the propositions are to perform concerns practical reason alone, the faith in the existence of God requires the permission or the assent of theoretical reason. In other words, they must be accepted by theoretical reason as *true*. In the first *Critique*, Kant states that faith means holding-to-be-true. Faith and knowledge are both regarded as ways of holding judgments. Since they must be justified by a sufficient ground, they are different from mere opinion, which is holding-to-be-true without sufficient reason.

Though faith and knowledge are ways of "holding" judgments, judgments about the supersensible made on practical grounds are not instances of knowledge because they lack sufficient objective grounds. Kant calls them faith and not mere opinion because they have sufficient subjective grounds. Thus, according to Kant, the attitude to the existence of God is not logical, but moral certainty. Kant says,

> *Opinion* is an assent that is consciously insufficient both subjectively and objectively. If the assent is sufficient only subjectively and is at the same time regarded as objectively insufficient, then it is called *faith*. Finally, assent that is sufficient both subjectively and objectively is called *knowledge*. (*CPR*, A 822/B 850)

However, Kant does not draw a clear distinction between subjective and objective sufficiency. In several passages, he tends to identify objective sufficiency with "being valid for everyone," and suggests that only objective sufficiency can give rise to true

conviction (*CPR*, A 821/B 849). Yet, at the same time, he also asserts that moral faith is "subjectively … sufficient absolutely and for everyone" and that it is a form of justified conviction. According to Allen W. Wood, a clue to Kant's meaning is the statement that from a practical point of view the theoretically insufficient holding-to-be-true can be termed believing (*CPR*, A 823/B 851). This suggests that "objectively sufficient," for Kant, does not mean "valid for everyone," but rather "*theoretically* sufficient." Accordingly, there might be a form of justified conviction which is not held on theoretical grounds, but justified for everyone on other subjective grounds. If this is the case, then what Kant intends to say is that the holding of a judgment is objectively sufficient if the grounds for holding that judgment consist in knowledge of the object concerned.[79] On the contrary, faith is essentially different from knowledge and no theoretical demonstration or evidences can be presented to support judgments which are held in this way. It is worth noting that in speaking of faith the believer is conscious of the objective insufficiency of the judgment he holds (*OT*, 8: 141). For Kant, faith is a personal and subjective matter. He expresses this structure of faith when he says that, as a result of the moral proof,

> No one, indeed, will be able to boast that he *knows* that there is a God and that there is a future life … No, the conviction is not a logical but a *moral* certainty; and because it rests on subjective bases (of the moral attitude), I must not even say, *It is* morally certain that there is a God, etc., but must say, I am morally certain, etc. (*CPR*, A 829/B 857)

Though faith in God is subjective in nature, it does not mean that faith for Kant is illogical or irrational. The moral argument is intended by him to justify a conviction

[79] Allen W. Wood, "Kant's Moral Argument," *Kant's Moral Religion*, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1970, p. 16.

which is, though subjectively, sufficient for everyone and is a reasonable belief for us finite rational beings. The moral arguments for the practical postulates cannot demonstrate that there is a God or a future life but on the basis of these practical considerations, Kant thinks that every rational agent is justified to postulate that there exists God and a future life.

c) The Postulate of the Existence of God

Kant stresses the subjective, non-evidential character of the moral argument for the existence of God. In this section, we will discuss of the problem of how subjective grounds can be a reason for holding something to be true. In a lengthy footnote in the Dialectic of the second *Critique*, Kant discusses a challenge by Thomas Wizenmann in an article in the *Deutsches Museum* of 1787. Wizenmann was commenting on Kant's *Orientation* of the previous year and raised the following puzzle about Kant's conception of pure rational faith: how can our needs give rational authority for the belief in the objective reality of God?[80] He elucidates his point by the example of a man in love, who, having become infatuated with an idea of beauty that is merely in his own chimera, wanted to infer that such an object *actually* exists somewhere (*CPr*R, 5: 143). Kant responds to this challenge by drawing the distinction between beliefs based on mere 'inclinations' and beliefs based on 'needs of reason.' Needs or beliefs based on inclination cannot postulate the existence of its object. These needs do not contain a demand valid for everyone, and hence they are a merely subjective basis of wishes. On the contrary, in the case of the moral argument, we are dealing with a belief based on a

[80] Peter Byrne, "The Positive Case for God," *Kant on God*, British: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007, p. 88.

need of reason arising from an objective determining ground of the will, namely the moral laws, which necessarily binds every rational being. Kant repeats the essential steps in the moral argument.

> It is a duty to make the highest good actual to the utmost of our ability; thus this good must, after all, also be possible, and hence for every rational being in the world it is also unavoidable to presuppose what is necessary for the objective possibility of this good. This presupposition is as necessary as the moral law, and is moreover valid only in reference to it. (*CPrR*, 5: 143)

Although Kant attempts to explain in what sense our needs can give rational authority to the belief in the existence of God, Byrne criticizes that Kant's response to Wizenmann's charge is too hasty. Kant is faced a crucial dilemma in presenting the argument for the postulate of the existence of God. If the moral argument is capable of justifying the belief in God, it must rest on sufficient evidence for God's existence; if the argument does not present sufficient evidence for God's existence, it cannot justify the belief. Though we have shown that the nature of faith does not require objective evidence or theoretical demonstration, we cannot ignore the above dilemma. Let us assume that a non-theist will accept the general premise that we moral agents ought, as determined by practical reason, to seek and to further the highest good. Let the non-theist even accept the further premise that we cannot see how this good is attainable unless we believe in an intelligent source of moral order. Kant seems to argue from premises about what we want to be true to conclusions about the reality of things.[81] Byrne criticizes that "our rational goals could not be obtained if there is no God provides no reason to think it is true that there is a God. That it would be good if a claim is true is no reason to believe

[81] Peter Byrne, "The Positive Case for God," *Kant on God*, British: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007, p. 88.

that claim."[82] Byrne states his criticism by articulating three equivalent questions that should yield the same answer. They are: (1) p? [Is there a God?], (2) Do I believe that p? [Do I believe that there is God?] and (3) Ought I believe that p? [Ought I believe that there is a God?] There are no reasons for giving a yes answer to the third question if we give a negative answer to the first question. Thus, it follows that to have rational faith that there is a God seems to amount to holding 'There is a God' to be true. If the considerations in the moral argument provide grounds for concluding that I ought to believe that there is a God, then they provide ground for my thinking that it is indeed true that there is a God. The grounds are therefore indicative to the existence of God.

The considerations in the moral argument are either truth indicative or not. If it is truth indicative, it can lead to a justified belief in the existence of God, but this belief can only belong to theoretical reason. If it is not truth indicative, then it can belong to practical reason, but it will not lead to a justified belief. The problem is that it is difficult to conceive how a rational need can provide support for the belief that there is a God. Supposing that our rational needs can provide support for the belief that there is a God, they will be truth indicative and are thus evidence for God's existence. As a result, the distinctively practical character of the moral argument for reason's self-orientation must be lost. Indeed, there is reason of taking Kant to be embracing the first horn of the dilemma and accepting that the moral argument is based on evidences for God's existence. In his reply to Wizenmann's challenge, Kant clearly states that the assumption of what is necessary for the objective possibility of the highest good is as necessary as the moral law. As the above quote passage in the second *Critique* (5: 145) indicates, the moral law is an objective determining ground of the will which necessarily binds every

[82] Ibid.

rational being.

On the other hand, there is also good reason to think Kant might embrace the second horn of the dilemma. This is to characterize the belief in the existence of God "rational faith." "There is a God" means a maxim to *act as if* there is a God. It means to take up a subjective maxim or a working assumption that there is a God. One can accept something as a working assumption even though one does not positively believe it to be true. One can treat the assumption as true for the sake of planning and acting. As what M. J. Ferreira puts it, practical belief in God might simply amount to the imperative to act in ways appropriate to the existence of God without a theoretical belief in his existence.[83] Kant's reference to the conviction that accompanies rational faith would then be equivalent to say that I act *as if* the assumption that there is a God is true. Indeed, there is a passage of Kant that supports this interpretation: "The reality of the idea of God can only be proved through this [the idea of freedom/ the moral laws], and hence only with a practical purpose, i.e., to act *as if there is a God* [*als ob ein Gott sei*], and hence only for this purpose." (*JL*, 9: 93) In the first *Critique*, Kant seems to support the 'as-if' interpretation of the existence of God when he speaks of the nature of God contained in natural theology. In response to the question if we may not at least think the supreme being different from the world in accordance with an analogy with objects of experience. Kant states that it is "indeed, but only as object in our idea and not in reality" (*CPR*, A 696-7/B 724-5). His reply means that we can form an idea of the first cause on the basis of analogies with agents in the world of experience, but we cannot suppose that the conception thus constructed represents something in reality. All that we can suppose to exist in reality is an unknown substratum of the world's systematic unity, order and

[83] M. J. Ferreira, "Kant's postulate: the possibility or the existence of God?," *Kant-Studien*, vol. 74, 1983, p. 80.

apparent purposiveness. According to Kant, the analogy between this unknown substratum and empirical things can be further considered in anthropomorphic terms, as long as we are clear that the anthropomorphisms are not attempts to represent what it is like, but merely a way of making the regulative use of the idea easier for us.[84] Kant states it clearly that

> What is more, we may without fear or rebuke permit in this idea certain anthropomorphisms that further the regulative principle at issue. For it is always an idea. This idea is not at all referred directly to a being distinct from the world. Rather, the idea is directly referred to the regulative principle of the world's systematic unity, but is referred to this principle only by means of a schema of this unity, viz., a supreme intelligence as originator of this unity according to wise intentions. Through this idea we were to think not what this original basis of the unity of the world is in itself, but how we are to use this basis—or, rather, the idea of it—relatively to reason's systematic use regarding the things of the world. (*CPR*, A 697/B 725)

Given that the need of reason to proceed *as if* the world of senses is the embodiment of a rational order that we can comprehend, we suppose that there is order behind the world. It seems right to draw the conclusion that the conception of an intelligent and all-powerful personal God is a matter of 'as-if,' but the reference behind this representation is not.

By employing the 'as-if' interpretation of the existence of God, the conclusion of the moral argument in the Dialectic of the second *Critique*, i.e., "it is morally necessary to assume the existence of God" means only that I am morally necessary *to act* in ways appropriate to God's existence. All Kant requires is a persuasion to the belief that there is

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[84] Peter Byrne, "The Positive Case for God," *Kant on God*, British: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2007, p. 63.

a God. As Ferreira notes, the structure of the moral argument requires no more than that God is possible. If we have a duty to promote the highest good, the "ought"-implies-"can" principle can merely show that the highest good must be possible of attainment. What rational moral agents need is the inward assurance that the highest good can be attained through moral effort. It can be attained if it is possible that there is a God.[85] It might help us understand the "Proof from Possibility," if we consider what Kant thinks atheists do not believe. What they deny is presumably what the person with rational faith accepts. At one point in the *Lectures on the Philosophical Doctrine of Religion*, Kant gives us some more details about it. He distinguishes dogmatic atheism from skeptical atheism and declares that it is to the former type of atheism that moral theism (or moral theology) is opposed. Dogmatic atheists cannot practice morality in Kant's view. They must be the most evil of human beings if they are genuine in their atheism. They are dogmatic in denying the existence of God and declaring it impossible that there is a God. Skeptical atheists, in contrast, find no proof that there is a God but acknowledge that there is a real possibility that God exists. Kant makes a comment on this kind of atheism:

> Now the belief in a merely possible God as ruler of the world is obviously the minimum of theology; but it is of great enough influence that it can occasion morality in any human being who already recognizes the necessity of his duties with apodictic certainty. It is entirely otherwise with the dogmatic atheists who directly denies the existence of a God, and who declares it impossible that there is a God at all. Either there never have been such dogmatic atheists, or they have been the most evil of human beings. In them all the incentives of morality have been broken down; and it is to these atheists that moral theism stands opposed. (*LPR*, 28: 1010)

[85] M. J. Ferreira, "Kant's postulate: the possibility or the existence of God?," *Kant-Studien*, vol. 74, 1983, p. 79.

Skeptical atheists, admitting the possibility that there is a God, definitely need not abandon the possibility of the highest good. They acknowledge the possibility of a God whose existence would entail that the highest good would come about, and thus they can acknowledge the possibility of the highest good. On the contrary, dogmatic atheists might appear to be in a hopeless position with regard to the possibility of the highest good.

Kant seems to accept the 'as-if' interpretation of practical faith in God. As long as someone takes the claim that there is a God to be possibly true, he or she can use it as a working assumption in guiding the pursuit of ends without positively believing that there is a God. Generally speaking, Kant accepts that the moral argument is based on non-evidential grounds. But, he also sometimes seems to claim that respect for the highest good implies a belief in the existence of God. What is certain is that Kant, in his Critical phase, consistently rejects the conception that appeal to supersensible realities to prove the existence of God. For Kant, any talk about the supersensible gives us no insight into reality. The "Proof from Possibility" asserts merely *subjective* significance. This conclusion is consistent with Wood's accounts of the nature of faith discussed in the last section. The ground for the moral argument is merely subjective. Kant's argument claims no insight into what makes the highest good really possible. This at the same time answers the question if moral theology or the moral argument entails postulating God's actual existence. In Kant's view, critical theist does not know anything about the reality of God and highest good. The moral argument only shows that it is possible that there is a God.

Conclusion

To conclude, this paper has discussed the primacy of practical reason in two contexts. The first part deals with the interest of reason as a whole and the problem of the unity of reason. The second part explains practical reason's primacy in the context of pure rational faith. Yet these two dimensions are closely connected. The first one can be understood as a background discussion about the primacy, in which we deal with the problems of how pure reason can be practical and how the products and applications of the two different uses of reason can be in harmony. The unification of reason is achieved by the assumption of practical reason that the world is designed and ordered by a supreme intelligence. There are two aspects from which the primacy of the practical reason can be shown. First, practical reason is unconditionally justified in believing the harmony between the realm of nature and that of morality. Moreover, it is justified to postulate the existence of God and the belief that nature is purposively arranged. In the realm of rational faith, the crucial problem is how and in what sense practical reason is justified to make the practical postulates. The conclusion of the moral argument for God is that it is necessary to assert that there is a God if we hope to be able to achieve the highest good. Thus, to say that practical reason has primacy is to say that reason can assert the existence of something that belongs to the necessary conditions of morality. In the context of teleology, reason seeks a final unconditional goal not only for human beings but for the whole nature. In this context, the idea of a supreme intelligent being or God is postulated by practical reason. The assumption of this supreme being is further supported by the moral argument from the viewpoint of pure rational faith.

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